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# MANUAL

OF

# PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR ECCLESIASTICAL STUDENTS AND  
NEWLY ORDAINED PRIESTS.

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*Public* BY

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ST. FRANCIS, WIS.

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## PREFACE.

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Pastoral Theology has at last appeared on the programmes of our ecclesiastical seminaries as a special branch of sacred science, thereby filling a want long felt. The newly ordained priest needs a guide to steer him safely past the rocks and shoals which lie in his course when he launches out into the open sea of practical ministry and apostolic labor. And this applies particularly to our own country, for here a priest's pastoral duties extend over a vastly wider sphere than elsewhere, and we have none of the traditional usages and laws with which clerical life is wont to be regulated abroad. Too often the young priest is sent to a mission where he is entirely alone almost immediately after his ordination. Comparatively few young ecclesiastics are fortunate enough to remain as assistants to experienced pastors for any length of time, where, by a wise supervision, they are gradually introduced to parochial work. Under these circumstances it is but proper that the advanced classes of our ecclesiastical students be given a course of lectures on Pastoral Theology before they leave the seminary.

A course on Pastoral Theology was commenced in the seminary of St. Francis several years ago. However, the need of a suitable text book was keenly felt. None being available in English, and those in other languages not being adapted to this country, we determined to prepare a text-book to meet the existing want.

Since this work was begun a praiseworthy volume on this topic has been prepared by Rev. Dr. Stang, but we believe that there is ample room for another. We there-

fore present this volume in the hope that it may prove of practical value.

The plan followed in the voluminous works on Pastoral Theology by such eminent authors as Bengier, Schuech, and others has been adopted, the subject matter being divided into three sections, treating of The Sacraments, on Preaching, and the Government of Parishes. Deeming the Sacraments to be the most important, and deserving of lengthy explanation, it has been placed first.

Possibly some will wonder why so little space was given the second section, important though it be, but there is an external reason for it. In the institution for which this work was primarily written—the Seminary of St. Francis of Sales—special classes (in English and German) on homiletics are given, in which extensive rules on preaching and catechising are laid down. If we are rightly informed, separate classes on homiletics or sacred rhetoric are also conducted in other seminaries. This may be sufficient reason to shorten the matter in the department of Pastoral Theology.

On all doctrinal points bearing on dogma, moral, liturgy, etc., we have endeavored to lay down nothing but what is perfectly sound and correct. Authors whose orthodoxy is beyond question, *i. e.*, St. Thomas, St. Alphonsus, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis of Sales, among the earlier writers, and Lehmkuhl, Sabetti, Manning, Ullathorne, among the more modern theologians, have been consulted; all are too well known to need apology.

Reference is frequently made to the Councils of Baltimore, quotations therefrom being freely appended. The reason is obvious: these Councils form a standard collection of ecclesiastical law for the Church in the United States. Besides, they contain a vast amount of practical wisdom and pastoral prudence. This may be said of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore in particular.

It is to be regretted that the average clergyman does not show as much acquaintance with the decrees and

instructions of this Council as would be desirable. Priests engaged in parochial work, reading them occasionally, would find in them much to quicken their ardor and renew their courage.

Besides the doctrinal points, practical views on many matters have been given. These are to be taken for what they are—the author's personal opinions. Before assuming the office of teacher in the seminary, some ten years were spent in practical ministry, and this experience should entitle us at least to a hearing. If the reader's ideas differ, we simply say: "In dubiis libertas." The views expressed are intended only as timely instruction for our young ecclesiastics—not as unseasonable advice forced upon the older members of the clergy.

Possibly some will think that certain matters should have been discussed more extensively, but we beg to state that the main purpose was to write a text-book for students. It is supposed that the teacher will properly interpret the text, adding such notes as he deems necessary.

We admit that the work is not faultless, but we trust that our good intentions will be acknowledged, and we hope that this little volume will find friends among the young ecclesiastics, particularly those who love to call the Salesianum their Alma Mater.

ST. FRANCIS, WIS.

Feast of the Annunciation, B. V. M., 1899.





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## INTRODUCTION.

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1. The object of Pastoral Theology as a special branch of theological science is to teach those practical rules which a priest ought to observe for the successful and faithful discharge of the sacred ministry. "God," says St. Paul, "has made us fit ministers of the New Testament, not in the letter, but in the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Whatever the various departments of Theology (dogma, moral, exegesis, etc.), contain in the line of wisdom, such wisdom, if it shall benefit the Christian body at large, must be applied in a proper way and correct manner, in due time and season. Although a great deal of such application must be left to the individual judgment, yet it is of importance to have a guide. This office of a guide, Pastoral Theology pretends to assume. A priest engaged in parochial work must needs be gifted with two qualities—prudence and charity. Charity makes him zealous, prudence is the light to show the route along which his zeal may operate. Pastoral Theology sets forth detailed norms for both. These norms are based upon the principles of moral and canon law, that through it find their illustration. A living ideal, however, is furnished by Christ Jesus, the greatest Pastor of souls that has ever appeared on earth. He Himself has set the example; and (in the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John) He has specified in His own words the duties and obligations of a shepherd of human souls, and the qualities with which he must be gifted. That passage of Holy Scripture is worthy of careful reading. It consti-

tutes, as it were, the *Magna Charta* of pastoral art and discipline. Also the inspired lessons contained in the Epistles of St. Paul to his disciples, Timothy and Titus, exhibit a great deal of practical wisdom, and serve the same purpose.

### PASTORAL LITERATURE.

2. Although there have been books of instruction for those engaged in the sacred ministry (cf. œcumenical or provincial councils, and diocesan synods) during all Christian ages, yet complete works of this kind, treating the whole matter in a systematic way, have not come to light until quite recently. It is only in this century, and of late, that Pastoral Theology has been regarded as a special branch of the science of divinity. The following list may serve as a guide:

#### A. In English—

- (a) Stang, Pastoral Theology.
- (b) Dubois, Zeal in the Sacred Ministry.
- (c) Manning, The Eternal Priesthood.
- (d) St. Alphonsus, Dignity and Duties of the Priest.
- (e) Gibbons, Ambassador of Christ.
- (f) Frassinetti, Parish Priest's Manual.
- (g) Mueller, The Priesthood.

#### B. In German—

- (a) Bengel, Pastoraltheologie.
- (b) Amberger, Pastoraltheologie.
- (c) Renniger, Pastoraltheologie. *Renniger*
- (d) \*Schüch, Pastoraltheologie.
- (e) Melcher, Pastorationsbriefe.
- (f) <sup>x</sup>Fais, Handbuch des Seelsorgers. *Fais*
- (g) Kerschbaumer, Pater familias.
- (h) Gassner, Handbuch der Pastoral.

#### C. In Latin—

- (a) St. Augustinus, De Catechizandis Rudibus.

\*The first part of Schüch's book has been translated into English by Rev. Lübberman under the title "The Priest in the Pulpit."

*has been republished and republished lately.*



- (b) St. Gregorius Mag., Regula Pastoralis.
- (c) St. Chrysostomus, Sex Libri De Sacerdotio.
- (d) St. Bernardus, De Vita et Moribus Clericorum.
- (e) Catechismus Romanus.
- (f) Instructio Pastoralis Eystettensis.
- (g) Schneider, Lectiones Quotidianæ. *Catechismal*

Also a number of theological periodicals and magazines in our day make it their specialty to treat of practical questions bearing directly on the sacred ministry. It may suffice to mention a few, viz:

A. In English—

(a) "The American Ecclesiastical Review," a monthly published in New York, 3 East Fourteenth street.

(b) "The Irish Ecclesiastical Record," a monthly published in Dublin, Ireland.

B. In German—

(a) "Theologisch Praktische Quartalschrift," published in Linz, Austria.

(b) "Der Katholische Seelsorger," a monthly published by Schöningh in Paderborn, Germany.

(c) "Pastoralblatt," a monthly published by B. Herder in St. Louis.

(d) "Pastoralblatt," a monthly published in Münster, Germany.

C. In Latin—

(a) "Analecta Ecclesiastica," a monthly published in Rome, Italy.

(b) "Acta Sanctæ Sedis," a monthly published in Rome, Italy.

D. In French—

"Nouvelle Revue Theologique," a bi-monthly published in Tournay, Belgium.

N. B.—Every priest should subscribe to at least one, if possible more than one, of these or other similar periodicals, so as to keep in touch with the current theological questions, and to know the latest laws and decisions. They may be obtained either directly from the publisher, or through any Catholic book-seller.

### 3. Division of the matter :

The God-man, Jesus, to whom all power has been given in Heaven and on earth, held, and still holds, a three-fold office: the office of a priest, the office of a teacher, and the office of a ruler. Relying on this triple order, we may also divide our matter into three sections. In the first section we shall explain the pastoral duties which are imposed by the priesthood proper, viz.: the administration of the sacraments, the celebration of Mass, etc. In the second section we shall investigate the duties incumbent upon a pastor as teacher, viz.: preaching and catechizing. The third section shall be devoted to the government of parishes, viz.: the organization of congregations, the management of schools, and societies, building of churches, etc.

# PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

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## SECTION I.

### THE SACRAMENTS.

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#### PART I.

##### THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

4. The Sacraments are not simply religious rites, but efficacious signs, by which God directly infuses his grace. They work "ex opere operato," but by means of a human action, which action, performed by a priest, assumes at once a sort of divine character. Christ said: "Pater meus operatur et ego operor;" and thus a priest may also justly say, "Christus operatur et ego operor." Here lies the secret of the priestly dignity, which surpasses that of kings and monarchs. For the valid administration of the sacraments, the sacerdotal character suffices, but for the worthy performance of them, the priest must be in the state of grace. Woe to him who, whilst his conscience accuses him of a mortal sin, that has not been blotted out through sincere penance and contrition, dares to perform that sacramental action so eminently divine. To prevent such a terrible sacrilege, and to protect the virtue of her ministers in general, the Church has enacted divers laws of the strictest kind, viz.: the law of celibacy; the law of excommunication inflicted upon "absolventes complices" or "solicitantes in confessione," etc. Above all is a priest urged and commanded never to ascend the altar, to celebrate Mass "in statu peccati mortalis," for he is bound

to go first to confession: Only an absolute necessity, a real "inopia confessarii" will excuse him, provided that his heart is penetrated with a true and perfect contrition, and that he will seek a confessor at his earliest opportunity. A priest who has charge of souls, and who therefore may be called upon at almost any time to administer a sacrament, cannot be too careful in preserving his own soul always in the state of grace; and one of the best means in this regard, no doubt, is the weekly, or at least fortnightly, confession.

5. The worthy and proper administration of the sacraments, however, demands still another requisite, viz.: the observance of the rubrics. The rubrics are wise laws issued by the Church, to insure both a valid and a becoming accomplishment of the effect desired, according to the nature of each sacrament. "Firmiter tenendum est," says St. Thomas, "quod ordinationes ecclesiae dirigantur secundum sapientiam Christi et propter hoc certum esse debet ritus quos ecclesia observat in sacramentis, esse convenientes." In and through the sacraments, the supernatural life of the mystical body of Christ is flowing as through so many channels, so that it would be a great neglect on the part of the Church to leave their administration in the hands of the individual priest. Ecclesiastical authority must determine minutely the rites and ceremonies to be followed. No doubt, the Holy Ghost, who rules and governs the Spouse of Christ, also lends his inspiration to those whose office it is to frame the laws of sacred liturgy. No priest, therefore, should ever attempt to despise these laws, and substitute for the rubrics of the Church his own private notions. Lest this happen, every one should study well beforehand the rites of the sacrament which he is about to confer, and also read annually, at least once, the whole ritual and the rubrics of the missal. Besides, it is a work of charity to remind a brother priest of faults and mistakes in the sacred functions, provided this be done with caution, prudence, and in a friendly way.

The public minister of the altar, when he is officiating, cannot fail to attract the attention of the people, sometimes even of non-Catholics, to his action. The Council of Baltimore therefore exhorts priests to be careful in their whole bearing. "*Dum sacramenta ministrant verba distincte et articulatum pronuntientur, incessus, vultus, corporis motus, vocis modulatio rei sanctissimae, quae agitur, conscientiam exprimant et fideles ad firmam fidem devotionemque intimam excitent. Praeterea pro viribus et rerum adjunctis eurent sacerdotes ut nitida et decora sint quae ad sacramentorum dispensationem requiruntur.*" This last remark is not superfluous. Many fail in this regard, and scandalize good people. Congregations and missions are hardly ever so poor that they cannot keep the most necessary articles for divine worship in a proper condition. A vestry-room in which there is neither order nor cleanliness is a disgrace to a pastor, and at once betrays his lack of faith and devotion.

6. Not only the priest who confers a sacrament, but also the faithful who receive it, should avoid everything which is not in keeping with its sacred character. The priest, as the minister of the sacraments and the custodian of the sanctuary, however, must heed and keep in mind the warning of Holy Writ, "*Nolite dare sanctum canibus neque mittatis margaritas vestras ante porcos, ne forte conculcent eas pedibus suis et conversi dirumpant vos.*" The rules taught in moral theology must not be ignored. The people should be instructed well as to their duties concerning both the valid and the licit reception of the sacraments, because not unfrequently they know very little about this. Especially the requisites for the great Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of Penance—such as contrition, the avoiding of occasions of sin, a firm resolution, etc., cannot be explained and inculcated too often.

7. If you wish to reform a parish and bring your flock to the practice of virtue, there is no more efficacious means



than to foster a frequentation of the sacraments. It may sometimes be hard to accustom the people to it, and may require a great deal of toil and patience; but this is no reason to become discouraged. The ordinary course of things is slow, but steady growth will meet with success in the end. Let the ignorance, indifference, or malice of the people, be ever so appalling, a zealous pastor will not allow his zeal to diminish, but will find means and ways sufficient to induce his flock to a frequent and worthy reception of the sacraments. Means of this kind are, for instance, public sermons, which in a detailed manner explain the importance and value of the sacraments; private exhortations given to individual persons in the confessional, especially during the Easter season; the establishment of societies; a pompous and solemn celebration of certain feasts, in particular the feast of the Patron Saint; last, but not least, the Forty Hours' Adoration.

8. A priest who has charge of souls, either as pastor or as assistant, must be ready to confer a sacrament upon any member of his flock, whenever there is a reasonable demand for it. A parent refusing food to his hungry children is charged with criminal cruelty. Is the crime of a priest withholding unjustly that great spiritual food, the Christian sacraments, from any soul, less abominable? We grant that sometimes people ask too much in this regard; for instance, scrupulous persons desiring to go to confession again and again under vain pretexts, or people who are but slightly sick, begging to be anointed. In the following cases, however, it is certain that a pastor cannot deny, or even postpone, his service without grave fault: 1, when called to a person who is in danger of death; 2, when there is fear that one may lose his life or become unconscious before he is able to make his confession; 3, if one wishes to fulfill a commandment of the Church, viz.: at the Paschal season; 4, when a person is subject to severe temptations, which he may overcome only

through an immediate reception of the sacraments; 5, when one is in a state of mortal sin which, if not remedied at once, may lead to worse results; 6, when there is a special feast, and one intends to receive Holy Communion out of devotion for the Mystery or Saint of the feast; 7, when a person wishes to gain an indulgence, in particular that of a jubilee. No matter what personal sacrifice is to be made, in these and similar cases a priest should not show any unwillingness or reluctance, because it is liable to create scandal. The worst thing, however, is to refuse the sacraments because people have not the money usually paid as "*jura stolae*" at such occasions. The fees, or perquisites, are simply a free gift, wherefore the Fathers of the Council of Baltimore justly remark: "*Edicimus ne quid pro sacramentorum administratione exigere, petere, aut pascisci quisquam audeat. Ea vero quae pietatis studio post collatum baptismum vel matrimonium, eleemosynae nomine a fidelibus sponte offeruntur sacerdos, si velit, accipiat.*"

9. A priest having charge of a congregation or a parish is obliged by law, both divine and ecclesiastical, to stay at home, lest people be left without spiritual aid at a time when they stand in particular need of it. The Council of Trent (*sessio VI. de. ref. c. II.*) says: "*Episcopis inferiores quaevis beneficia ecclesiastica personalem residentiam exigentia obtinentes, ab eorum ordinariis opportunis juris remediis residere cogantur, nullaque privilegia seu indulta perpetua de non residendo aut de fructibus in absentia percipiendis suffragentur.*" Of course, this duty of residence must be understood in a moral sense. Thus, a priest may absent himself for a short time, but he must then make provision for all emergencies. If he is absent for one day, he must leave word as to his whereabouts; if for several days, he must have a substitute, who may be a neighboring priest; if for a week, and over Sunday, a special substitute must be appointed, and also permission obtained from the ordinary. A priest being absent over

two months during one year, even if it should be for a grave cause and with due permission, is not entitled to his entire salary, but only pro rata. It makes no difference whether the two months are in succession or not; the time of absence must not exceed two months in the aggregate. Residence is two-fold, *residentia materialis* and *residentia formalis*. The former means simply to be physically present; the latter implies that a pastor works for his flock, and even does the principal work if he has an assistant. This "residentia formalis" is understood by the law. Far from shutting himself up as a hermit in his cell, a parish priest must keep in contact with his people, study their ways and habits, have an eye to their spiritual wants, and be freely accessible to them in all their needs. Not the extraordinary work outside of his parish, but the ordinary labor for those over whom the bishop has set him as ruler, is what a priest must have at heart.

*With careful attention to the  
old laws before they are  
abolished.*

## PART II.

## THE SACRAMENTS IN PARTICULAR.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

## ARTICLE I.—THE SUBJECT OF BAPTISM.

10. Who may be and should be baptized? It is a Christian and a Catholic dogma of faith, that Baptism is a sacrament absolutely necessary for salvation, and this “*de necessitate medii*,” in order to be cleansed from original sin, with which every man at his entrance into this world is infected. Christian parents, therefore, have the duty to bring their new-born infants to the church, that they may be baptized as soon as possible after their birth. It makes no difference whether the child is sick and feeble, or strong and robust, because these babes are all of a very tender constitution, which, by a slight attack of sickness may succumb to death; but if they die without the great Sacrament of regeneration, they most certainly are excluded from Heaven. Under ordinary circumstances, therefore, parents should present their offspring for Baptism not later than about one week or two after birth. An allowance must certainly be made in this country for rural districts, where parties may live at quite a distance from the church or station, so that it is almost impossible, especially during the winter season, to bring the children immediately. Real negligence, however, deserves a severe rebuke. Occasionally in his sermons, and also in the

instruction given to bridal couples before their marriage, a pastor ought to call the attention of the people to this point, and show the importance of the obligation.

11. Great care must be taken with a foetus in case of immature birth, miscarriage, etc., or with a foetus which is alive in the mother's womb, after the mother herself has died. Such a *foetus humanus* is in possession of a human soul, which, if not duly baptized, will be lost forever. Careless and ignorant as people are, they often throw the foetus away and let it perish. Therefore, when circumstances of this kind occur, a skillful surgeon ought to be called at once. The blood that has issued from the mother's womb must be examined closely, because the foetus is sometimes very small (only an inch or two), and if the woman pregnant is dead, by a post-mortem operation the child should be extracted. As long as there is no sure sign of death, it ought to be baptized at least conditionally. If possible, the priest himself is bound to baptize; otherwise it may be done by the surgeon or mid-wife, provided either be a Catholic and understand well the mode of Baptism. A small foetus is usually baptized by immersion, after the capsula in which it is enclosed has been opened. All the points here mentioned, delicate as the matter may seem, must be well explained to those whose duty it is to look after such an affair. A priest having a pastoral charge would load his conscience with guilt, if he were to leave his people in total ignorance of this matter. In due time and season, with circumspection and discretion, the proper information must be given to those whom it concerns, viz.: mothers, mid-wives, physicians, etc. With young, newly married women who, in half a year or so after their marriage, contract a fatal disease, cases of the kind mentioned are likely to occur. A miscarriage or the death of the mother, although it deprives the foetus and offspring of the life of the body, should not deprive it of the life of the soul.

12. A priest may also feel rather puzzled sometimes

as to his course of action when infants are offered for Baptism, whose future Catholic education may be doubtful. May they be and must they be baptized, or is it proper to withhold Baptism from them? To answer the question, we must distinguish, viz.: either such an infant is in imminent danger of death or not. In the first case, Baptism ought to be conferred by all means, because the child has a right to it, as without Baptism it will be lost. The consent of the parents is not required, although it may be best to ask them. If a priest can easily get access to non-Catholic families he may give Baptism to a dying infant himself, otherwise he may induce Catholic lay people, especially women, to confer private Baptism. All, of course, must be done prudently, lest it give rise to odium, talk, and scandal.

If a child is not in imminent danger of death, the following rules should be followed:

a. If both parents are non-Catholics, a child of theirs cannot be justly baptized by a Catholic priest, except they give their consent and also promise to have the child raised a Catholic, which promise must be sufficiently warranted (by a Catholic sponsor, etc.).

b. If both parents are, or, rather, should be, Catholics, but through malice object to the Baptism of their offspring, Baptism should not be given.

c. If one of the parents (Catholic or not) object, the other being satisfied, the child ought to be baptized, as long as there is reasonable hope of a future Catholic education.

d. If one of the parents is a negligent Catholic, the other an infidel or Protestant, caution is necessary. However, as long as the Catholic party, on his own account, desires to have his child baptized and makes arrangements to have it raised a Catholic in future, for instance, by appointing a good Catholic as sponsor, it is hardly right to refuse Baptism. If no arrangements are made, and no guarantees are given, it may be better to wait, at least if the negligent Catholic parent himself has not yet asked



to have his child baptized, because then it is almost certain that it will not remain a Catholic.

e. If non-Catholic children who have reached the age of discretion, themselves ask for Baptism, all circumstances must be well weighed, viz.: their age, motive, home surroundings, etc., and if there is every reason to hope that they will persevere, they must be admitted, and the objection made by the parents cannot form an obstacle.

13. Whilst the Baptism of infants must be hastened, it is different with adult persons. The Church insists that they shall not be baptized until they have been so well tried and thoroughly instructed in Catholic faith, morals, and discipline, as to leave no reasonable doubt whatever about their good intentions and determination to persevere. In the early ages of Christianity the discipline of the Church was very strict, and those wishing to join the body of the faithful had to submit to a regular catechumenate, which lasted for months and even years. In the ancient form, it is true, this catechumenate has been abolished, yet it is a great abuse to admit one to the membership of Christ or into His fold, before he knows what obligations he assumes. The words of the Roman Ritual are clear and expressive on this point: "*Debet prius secundum apostolicam regulam in christiana fide ac sanctis moribus diligenter instrui, et per aliquot dies in operibus pietatis exerceri ejusque voluntas et propositum saepius explorari et nonnisi sciens et volens probeque instructus baptizari.*"

14. The first thing to be done with converts, who ask to be admitted into the Catholic Church, is to examine their intention and to see what object they have in view. Not all that present themselves are led by the right motive. Thus, for instance, people may desire to become Catholics in order to get some temporal support, or the patronage of Catholics in business or politics; others, perhaps, intend to marry a Catholic, and, simply to please their betrothed, they are ready to go through the formality, as they say, of joining the Catholic Church. It is self-evident that such

motives can in no way be accepted as sufficient. The only justifiable motive is the salvation of one's own soul. Those who are not thus disposed, but are induced by temporal interests, must be dismissed, because they would certainly become apostates soon after their baptism. However, it is not necessary to dismiss them at once. A trial should be given to everyone who comes to see a Catholic priest with the intention of conversion. It may happen that those who through ignorance deemed the whole affair a mere formality, afterward begin to think about it with a more serious mind, and thus gradually become well disposed.

15. But what instruction must adults receive before they can be admitted to Baptism? Except in case of death, when a short explanation of the principal dogmas and moral precepts may be sufficient, converts, under ordinary circumstances, must learn the whole catechism, —and this not hurriedly and superficially within a few days, but carefully; even if it should take weeks and months. Special attention ought to be given to the chapter which treats on the Church, and such points as appear to them more difficult, so that all doubts in matters of faith are cleared away. Besides, these converts must get used to practical Catholic life—such as going to Mass on Sundays, abstaining from meat on Fridays, fasting, prayer, etc. Not before they feel themselves perfectly at home in the Catholic Church should they be received as full members. Protestants, therefore, wishing to join the Church at the occasion of a mission, as is frequently the case, must not, after a short instruction, be baptized at once by the missionary fathers. The excitement under which they have lived during the mission will soon die out, and they might fall away again. The missionaries to whom such appeals are made, should send the applicants to the local clergy and leave the whole matter in their hands. The priest himself, then, who resides in the place, and has a chance to observe people in their ordinary ways of life,

will assume the task of instructing the converts. I say the priest himself, for the work belongs to his personal charge. He cannot well entrust others with it. Burdensome as the affair may appear, yet a priest may find consolation in the thought that thus he is doing a truly apostolic work, literally fulfilling the command of Christ, "Docete omnes gentes," etc.

16. The mode of instruction, of course, will vary according to the disposition, age, standing, etc., of the catechumen. Educated people must be treated differently from those who are only of the common and ordinary class, but all must be received with kindness, love and patience. To those who are able to read well, or who are versed in literature, you may give besides the catechism also some suitable controversial books.

17. In dealing with a married catechumen, the priest should carefully examine the validity of his marriage. People here in the United States frequently get divorced from each other, or marry such that have been divorced from others. If such or another "*impedimentum dirimens*" exists, from which dispensation cannot be obtained, the party, as a rule, must be informed, even if that should keep him from the Church. Also, an investigation must be made concerning those secret societies which come under ecclesiastical ban. If the person should happen to be a member of such a society, he must be urged to give up that membership before Baptism.

18. It happens sometimes that children born of Catholic parents or the offspring of mixed marriages, have been left without Baptism simply through carelessness or ignorance of their father or mother. When they have come to the age of reason, say about five years, they cannot be baptized before they have first been instructed and have expressed their own will to receive Baptism. This instruction, however, must not be so extensive at once as with adult persons, at least if they will be sent afterward to a Catholic parochial school, or a catechetical class for the

young. It is not out of place, either, to add right here a short monitum of practical importance. Whenever a priest has to deal with a female catechumen, especially a young lady, he must be exceedingly prudent and careful as to his own reputation. Such <sup>substantive</sup> (would-be) convert should not come to the priest's house for instruction except in company with a good Catholic woman.

19. The instruction of catechumens being over, they must be formally received into the Church. Those who come from another denomination, in which they have been baptized, ought to make a profession of faith, as laid down in the ritual, then they ought to be absolved from heresy and other censures, perhaps incurred, which absolution takes place in foro externo, and for which a priest may need special faculties. After it they receive Baptism conditionally, and make a general confession, at the end of which they are again absolved sub conditione. Those who certainly never have been baptized before, receive only Baptism without any other formality, although a sort of confession, not sacramental however, may be made before it in order to detect certain obligations, viz.: of restitution, repairing of scandal, etc., or to offer advice, such as the avoiding of proximate occasions, etc. The rule to-day seems to be always to confer conditional Baptism upon those who come from a Protestant sect, because there is in most cases a reasonable doubt concerning the Baptism they have received before. Still, some investigation should always be made with each person, lest a priest become irregular by rebaptizing without sufficient reason.

## ARTICLE II.—THE MINISTER OF BAPTISM.

20. The minister of Baptism is three-fold, the ordinary, the extraordinary, and the minister by necessity. The ordinary minister of Baptism is the bishop for his whole diocese, and the parish priest or rector of a mission for the district assigned to him, for to baptize is a parochial function in a strict sense. The parish priest, how-

ever, is the one in whose parish the parents of the child have a domicile, or with adults in whose parish these adults have such domicile. A priest who baptizes a person, child or adult, that does not come under his jurisdiction, is guilty of a grave fault, except he has reason to presume that the *parochus proprius* is satisfied. All this applies also to this country, the United States, although we have no parishes in a strict canonical sense. The Second Council of Baltimore says on this point: *Hinc gravissima reprehensione digni sunt sacerdotes, qui infantes ab aliena sive paroecia sive diocesi sibi oblatos temere baptizant, quum facile a proprio pastore baptizari potuissent. Abusum hunc iterum damnamus ac prohibemus.* (Conc. no. 227.). The limits therefore assigned by the bishop in dividing congregations must not be overstepped. Adults and infants who are regular inmates of orphan-houses, hospitals, and similar institutions, that have a resident priest as chaplain, may if the bishop has given quasi parochial jurisdiction to such chaplain be baptized by him and in their own house or chapel.

21. The extraordinary minister of Baptism is the deacon. We say the extraordinary, because he is not allowed to confer Baptism unless he has been commissioned for this by the bishop or the parish priest. Such commission, however, cannot be granted except in a case of grave necessity, for instance, if the rector of the congregation is sick, if he is detained by urgent work, and if the parties cannot wait or be expected to come back soon. A deacon who has been duly commissioned may baptize solemnly, viz.: with all the ceremonies as found in the ritual.

22. In the absence of the ordinary and extraordinary minister (bishop, priest, deacon), any person, Catholic or non-Catholic, male or female, may baptize privately those who are in imminent danger of death. If the priest, however, after he has received notice, could hurry to the place where the dying person lives and get there in time, he ought to do so. Parents must not baptize their own

infants if they can get anyone else for it, otherwise they lose their right *ad debitum conjugale*. It is but proper and just to remind the people once in a while, on the obligation of conferring private Baptism in urgent cases of necessity, and also to teach the right mode of baptizing. In particular should such persons be well instructed by the pastor, whose very profession may force them occasionally to confer private Baptism, viz.: mid-wives, nurses, physicians. Curent sacerdotes, ut omnes fideles, praesertim medici, nutrices, et obstetrices privati baptismi conferendi modum rite calleant. (Conc. Baltim. II. n. 228.)

### ARTICLE III.—BAPTISMAL REQUISITES.

23. It is of importance that in a sacrament absolutely necessary for salvation, nothing be omitted which is required for its validity, *jure divino*. The matter and form must be those which the God-man Jesus himself has established. However, in solemn Baptism those laws or rubrics must be well observed which the Church, guided by the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, has introduced, and which the Roman Ritual, the only Ritual approved for this country, contains. “Cæremonias, quæ in baptismo administrando ad majorem pompam ac solemnitatem faciunt, Ecclesia sapienti consilio invenit ac magno semper in honore habuit. Hinc, eas in solemnium quem vocant baptismum omittere, resecare, mutilare, præpostero ordine adhibere aut in alias immutare nefas est.” (Conc. Baltim. II. n. 235.)

24. The *materia valida remota* is natural water, such as rain water, water found in rivers, wells, ponds, lakes, etc., the *materia proxima* is the ablution with water, we say the ablution, for the recipient of the Sacrament must actually be washed, either as to the whole body, say by immersion, or as to his head alone by infusion. If the water touches not the head, but an inferior part, viz.: the breast, feet, etc., or if it does not touch the skin, or finally if but a few drops of water fall on the head, so that the

*Schismatis must be resuscitated*



procedure could not be called ablution, the sacramental effect would at least become doubtful. At the same time, when the water is applied, the form must be pronounced exactly in this way: "Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti." Whenever this form is expressed in the vernacular, care must be taken not to use words or versions which make the effect questionable. Thus in the English idiom, the pronoun "I" is absolutely necessary; do not say either "I christen," as some people do, but "I baptize." Finally, the person who baptizes must have the intention of performing a sacramental action, or as theologians express it, "*intentio faciendi, quod facit Ecclesia*." Lay people, however, who seriously desire to confer private Baptism, who do not mean to mock, need not trouble themselves about the proper intention, because their very action is a proof and guarantee of their intention.

25. Whenever solemn Baptism is administered, the water used must have been consecrated. This consecration or blessing ought to take place twice a year, on Holy Saturday, and in the Vigil of Pentecost. The custom formerly prevailing in this country to bless the baptismal water only once a year, on the eve of Easter, has since been condemned as an abuse. S. R. C. interrogata de consuetudine, etc., respondet: "*Parochus fontem baptismalem bis in anno, sabbatis nimirum diebus Paschae et Pentecostes benedicere debere et consuetudinem in contrarium velut abusum et rubricis contrariam esse eliminandam*." The water thus blessed should be kept within the Church, and in a baptismal font. This font may be made of any material, but the bowl which contains the water must be impervious and hard. There should indeed be two bowls, one to preserve the water, the other to receive the ablution after Baptism. Where only one bowl is had, the water flowing from the person baptized, must be caught in some clean vessel, and be poured into the sacrarium afterward, but not repoured into the font. The place where the font

is put should be somewhat conspicuous; not in the sacristy or in a dark corner below the steps. It is proper to have a small railing around it, so as to keep that whole compartment clean and neat. Stubs of candles, stray matches, dirty pieces of linen lying about make a bad impression. The font itself, thus the rubrics prescribe, must always be well closed and locked, except when in actual use. The key must be kept by the pastor in the same way as the tabernacle key. If the baptismal water should give out or become unfit during the year, it must be renewed at once, and the priest is directed then to use the long formula specially set apart for this case in the Ritual. The Roman Ritual has also a very short formula for the blessing of baptismal water, granted as a special privilege to missionaries. This short formula, however, cannot be used except when there is a grave necessity for it. In out-missions which have no resident priest, the baptismal water must be procured from the church at which the pastor resides, and a sufficient quantity should always be kept there either in a font or at least in a well-closed jar. When it is kept in a jar, such a vessel must be moved to a warm place during the winter season, lest the water freeze and break the vessel. Should a priest ever give private Baptism, in a case of urgent need and outside of the Church, then he may use either consecrated water or common water not blessed. Laics and those who are in orders less than deaconship are not allowed to use any water that has been consecrated.

26. The holy oils used in solemn Baptism are the *oleum catechumenorum* and *chrism*. Both these oils must have been blessed by the bishop on the preceding Holy Thursday. It is a mortal sin to use the old oils if new ones can be obtained. Every pastor should procure them in time at the cathedral or some other place assigned for it. They are needed at once on Holy Saturday for the blessing of the water. Should it be impossible to obtain them on that day, then the blessing of the baptismal water must not be

omitted, but be performed with the old oils and the new oils taken for the blessing on the Vigil of Pentecost. The oils must be preserved in vessels especially made for that purpose, either of gold or silver, or perhaps even of tin, aluminum, etc.; at any rate not of a material oxidable. Letters ought to be placed on the outside of these vessels to prevent mistakes which may render the sacrament doubtful. The proper place to put such vessels is in the church, either near the altar, in the sanctuary, or in the sacristy. Never can they be placed in the tabernacle that actually contains the Sacred Host.

27. The salt blessed for Baptism should be fine or powdered table salt, so that it may not be too distasteful for the infant when put upon its tongue. Once blessed it cannot be used for any other purpose, not even "*ad faciendam aquam benedictam*," but it may be preserved and applied in the Baptism of several persons. You may keep this salt with the other baptismal utensils in a locked drawer or box near the font.

28. The other requisites for the administration of Baptism are the following: A vessel in the form of a shell, made of metal to dip the water from the font and to pour it over the head of the person baptized; a few pieces of cotton to wipe off the oil; a towel to wipe off the ablution or drops of water remaining on the head; two stoles, one purple, the other white; a white garment in the shape, perhaps, of a handkerchief, but of linen, which is placed on the head after Baptism; a blessed candle to be given to the sponsors at the same time.

#### ARTICLE IV.

##### THE CEREMONIES OF SOLEMN BAPTISM.

29. Solemn Baptism means Baptism conferred with all the ceremonies which the Church has introduced, according to the formula found in the Roman Ritual. These

ceremonies have been added in order to lend a greater splendor to the whole rite, and to make a deeper impression on the faithful. They have a holy effect similar to the Sacrament itself, however not *ex opere operato* but *ex opere operantis*, just like the other sacramentals. There is a mystical meaning in them; they symbolize the graces imparted. Leaving aside a full explanation of them, which may be found in liturgical authors, we shall dwell only on those practical points which our discipline, viz.: pastoral theology, calls for. Thus:

30. It may be asked, where shall solemn Baptism be conferred? According to a strict ecclesiastical precept, solemn Baptism can be administered licitly only in the church and at the font. The Roman Ritual says: "Proprius baptismi administrandi locus est ecclesia, in qua sit fons baptismalis, vel certe baptisterium prope ecclesiam. Itaque necessitate excepta, in privatis locis nemo baptizari debet." St. Alphonsus has a note: "Mortale est, sine necessitate baptizare extra ecclesiam." In missionary countries, as ours partly yet is, the rule has been modified a little. Therefore when with the permission of the bishop, a priest offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in a private house, he is also eo ipso authorized to baptize solemnly at such an occasion, provided all the requisites for solemn Baptism (viz.: blessed water, holy oils, etc.) are on hand. Again, if people live at a very long distance from any church (viz.: 15, 20, or more miles) and if on account of bad roads, etc., it would be impossible for them to come to church with the new-born infant within a reasonable time (perhaps not for the whole season), a priest may go to the private house of the family, and there confer solemn Baptism. (cf. Conc. Baltim. II. n. 237). Cases of the latter kind are now, in most of our dioceses, quite rare it seems. Finally, if through necessity, viz.: danger of death, a priest administers private Baptism—he ought to add at once the three ceremonies following the ablution, namely, the anointing with chrism, the offering of the

white garment and the lighted candle. All other ceremonies must then be omitted and supplied afterward at the font, if the sick infant or adult person should survive.

31. For solemn Baptism you also require sponsors. One is sufficient; two may be chosen, but they must then be of a different sex; never more than two. Not every person is qualified to act as sponsor. The following are excluded from the office: (a) All infidels, heretics, apostates, or those who are excommunicated. (b) All who are known to be members of secret societies forbidden by the Church, viz.: Free Masons, Odd Fellows, etc. (c) All public sinners whose life is a scandal to others; for instance, those who live in bigamy, in an illegal marriage, etc. (d) Young persons who have not reached the age of puberty or who have not yet been confirmed. (e) Parents for their own children. (f) Religious of both sexes. Catholics who have not attended to their Easter duty may be admitted as sponsors, as long as the fact is not publicly known and they have not ceased to attend Church altogether. The priest about to baptize is obliged to inquire beforehand who the sponsors are, and whether they are such as the canons permit. "*Parochus antequam ad baptizandum accedat, ab iis ad quos spectat, exquirat diligenter, quem et quos susceptores seu patrilinos elegerint, ne plures quam liceat aut indignos aut ineptos admittat.*" (*Rituale Romanum*). Should there ever be a necessity of refusing a sponsor chosen by the parents as being unworthy or inept, it ought to be done with all kindness, as long at least as the people do not know any better. If one of the two sponsors is a good Catholic, you may simply let the one hold or touch the infant at the moment of Baptism, and allow the other to be present as a witness without telling the second party of the inability to be sponsor. If only one is there, or if both are unfit, then call upon some good Catholic person (sexton, housekeeper, etc.) to hold the child, and let the sponsor chosen by the parents simply stand by. Thus all may be settled in an amicable way

without bad consequences. Only the actual or physical touching of the infant when the ablution is applied constitutes one as *patrinus* or *matrina*. Only then the spiritual relationship with the child and its parents is contracted. Those who have assumed the office must be told about this when the whole ceremony is over. Also the obligation they undertake, viz.: to provide for the christian and Catholic education of their spiritual children in case the parents should die or fail in their duty, should be made known to the god-father and god-mother.

32. Before you commence to baptize, you must not forget to ask a few previous questions, as: Has the child received private baptism because it was in danger of death, and if so, by whom? If that Baptism is certainly valid, you can only supply the ceremonies; if it is doubtful, as usual, you must confer only conditional baptism. Again, ask the parties whether they are of your parish. If not, kindly dismiss them, unless you have reason to presume that the *parochus proprius* has no objection to you baptizing such an infant. Last, but not least, ask what name they intend to give the infant. On this point the Roman Ritual justly remarks: "*Sacerdos curet, ne obscoena, fabulosa, aut ridicula vel inanium deorum vel impiorum, ethnicorum hominum nomina imponantur, sed potius quatenus fieri potest sanctorum quorum exemplis fideles ad pie vivendum excitentur et patrociniis protegantur.*" Names taken from heathen mythology, as for instance, Diana, Apollo, names of heresiarchs like Luther, Calvin, and even names of national heroes such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Grover Cleveland, are improper for a Christian child. Also Old Testament names, as Hiram, Solomon, Rebecca, are at least less becoming. There are plenty of Christian saints; why not choose a name from their number? Whenever parties offer a Christian name, but in a somewhat shortened or corrupted form, viz.: Bob, Dick, Mollie, then baptize the child by the correct and full name, Robert, Richard, Mary.



33. The Roman Ritual has two distinct formulas of solemn Baptism; one for infants; another for adults. Only those that have not reached the age of reason can be baptized according to the "*ordo baptismi aduultorum*." For All who have come to the years of discretion, say children of seven and sometimes even six or five years, must be baptized according to the *ordo baptismi aduultorum*. Formerly the Holy See had granted a special privilege to bishops and priests throughout the whole United States by which they were allowed to adopt the formula of infants also for the Baptism of adults. This universal privilege has been revoked since, but not unfrequently bishops have obtained a privilege of that kind for their dioceses. Each priest therefore must consult the faculties granted to him by his ordinary or his local statutes. The Fathers of the Second Provincial Council of St. Louis in 1858 requested to be allowed to use the formula of Baptism of infants for adults. This request was granted, it seems, to an unlimited time, and as far as we know has not been revoked. It was intended for the whole province, which then comprised several western states, viz.: Missouri, Tennessee, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Indian Territory; priests residing within this whole district may, therefore, yet make use of the privilege granted, until formal annulment shall take place. However, as the long formula is more solemn and more impressive, it is advisable rather to follow it if it can be done conveniently, at least as long as the adult person himself is satisfied, and when there is a concourse of people witnessing. Should the ceremonies have been omitted for one reason or another at the time when the Sacrament of Baptism was conferred, they must be supplied afterward, even though a long time intervened. You use the formula for infants, if the person had been validly baptized in infancy and been raised a Catholic; if he had been baptized in a Protestant sect, although validly as an infant, you ought to use the formula for



adults and also always when the baptism conferred in infancy is doubtful, no matter whether he has been raised a Catholic or heretic. The questions addressed to the sponsors, or with adult people to the adults themselves, must be put always in Latin first, but it is permitted to repeat them in the vernacular, if it is done according to an approved version, as, for instance, in our "Excerpta" or small edition of the ritual. (cf. Sabetti Theo., Mor. n. 666.) Should there be more than one to be baptized, it is allowed to say the prayers only once over, all of them, and "in numero plurali," but the Baptism itself, say the ablution or pouring of the water over the head must be done separately with each, likewise all unctions with the holy oil, the offering of the white garment and candle; also the salt which is put on the tongue, and several other things must be applied "singula singulis."

34. The rector of a congregation or parish is bound to keep an exact account of all the Baptisms which take place in his church. This is necessary to prove the fact that Baptism has been conferred, and to trace the spiritual relationship. The following items should thus be duly registered, viz.: The name of the infant, the name of the father, the maiden name of the mother, the names of the sponsors, the date of birth, the date of Baptism, the name of the priest who has performed the act. If the child is of illegitimate birth, this circumstance must be inserted. If the child has received private Baptism validly, and only the ceremonies have been supplied, the name of the person who had administered private Baptism must be added. The proper language in which to enter things is the Latin, not the vernacular. The books or registers ought to be preserved carefully and in a safe place. When a priest has to attend several missions each having a church where Baptisms are conferred, he ought to have a separate register for every mission.

35. In connection with Baptism we may add a few words about that special blessing given to mothers after

the birth of an infant, "vulgo churching." The Second Council of Baltimore, referring to it, says: "*Pium illum ritum ac morem, qui apud christianas mulieres a partu recentes dudum invaluit, a nostris vero persaepe negligitur, ascendendi ad ecclesiam ad gratias agendas et benedictionem petendam commendent animarum pastores ejusque originem et causas data occasione explicant.*" Though not of strict obligation, but only of counsel, still no Catholic mother should neglect this blessing or sacramental. Her first walk, indeed, after she has recruited from the crisis of child-bearing, should be to the church to thank the Lord and implore His help in the education of the new-born child. This blessing cannot be given to mothers of an illegitimate child, and not outside of the church, except in a house in which, with the ordinary's permission, Mass is said.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION.

36. It is a dogma of Christian and Catholic faith, that Confirmation is a sacrament instituted by Christ Jesus. The special object of this sacrament is to strengthen the soul previously baptized, that it may offer a more powerful resistance to the various assaults faith and virtue meet with, as long as we live in this world, the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christ being diametrically opposed to each other. The *Catechismus Romanus* says: "*Sed ab eo nomen rei impositum est quod hujus sacramenti virtute Deus in nobis id confirmat, quod baptismo operari coepit hominesque ad christianae soliditatis perfectionem adducit.*" A person by Baptism becomes a member of Christ, the confirmed is justly named a soldier of Christ, the former is obliged to work out his own salvation, the latter shall also contribute, as far as it is in his power, to

propagate God's kingdom, or at least endeavor to be an ornament to the Church, and win for her the esteem and favor of outsiders. St. Thomas expresses the same thought: "*In baptismo accipit homo potestatem ad ea agenda, quae ad propriam pertinent salutem, prout secundum seipsum vivit, sed in confirmatione accipit homo potestatem ad agendum ea, quae pertinent ad pugnam spiritualem contra hostes fidei.*"

37. Is Confirmation necessary for salvation? To this question we answer it is not needed "*necessitate medii.*" Without it a person could obtain eternal beatitude, yet its absence will always constitute a notable defect even in heaven. Moreover, people who are of the required age, are bound by a positive commandment, both divine and ecclesiastical, to receive this sacrament when they have an opportunity. Benedict XIV., in his *institutiones*, remarks: "*Certum est adulta jam ætate homines vel in re vel saltem in voto debere necessitate præcepti confirmari, quod etiam inter Dei præcepta annumeratur aut cum bellum contra fideles infertur vel cum dæmonis fraude de religione anxii sollicitique graviter jactamur vel tandem quum in ultimum vitæ discrimen adducimur. Tunc autem ecclesiæ præceptum dicitur, cum quis rationis usu præditus si episcopus hujus sacramenti minister præsto sit nulla legitima causa ad illud suscipiendum impediatur. Itaque ferme universe theologi sentiunt et eos gravi labe inquinari testantur, qui ob contemptum vel oscitantem socordiam animam istius sacramenti gratia muniri prætermittant.*" Especially in our days and in our country this sacrament is greatly needed, because the dangers threatening faith and virtue are constantly increasing. We are at present in a condition similar to, if not worse, than that in which the early Christians were in the days of the Apostles; and we know from Holy Scripture how eager and careful they were not to omit this great sacrament of the Holy Ghost. It is, therefore, the duty of all pastors of souls to watch, lest any of those committed to their charge be left without

Confirmation. In some dioceses the bishop himself is wont to appoint the places where, and the time when, he will confirm, in others he leaves it to the local parish priests to invite him when they are ready. In the latter case the priest himself is charged not to let too long a period pass. As a rule in small congregations and in rural districts every third year, in large parishes every two years, and, if they are very large, every year, confirmation should take place. The pastor must admonish all parents to send their children; and also announce that if there be any amongst the older people who, perchance, may not have been confirmed, they ought not to neglect the matter longer, but make use of the opportunity thus offered. Sometimes such old people feel ashamed to present themselves; if so, you must see them personally, and urge them in every way possible to procure for themselves the grace of the sacrament.

38. Though, strictly speaking, Confirmation may be received by any one validly baptized, including infants, still custom in this country at least requires that only those be confirmed who have been admitted to First Communion. Never should a child of less than seven years be presented. "*Statuimus confirmationis sacramentum administrandum esse nemini minori septemio, nisi ob peculiare rationes, v. g. in mortis periculo.*" (Conc. Baltim. II. n. 252.) The confirmandi must prepare themselves well beforehand. They ought to go to confession, and, if possible, receive Holy Communion in the morning, because the sacrament of Confirmation is a "*sacramentum vivorum,*" and must be administered only to those who are in the state of grace. Fasting is not prescribed, but only advised.

39. Besides this immediate preparation, also a remote preparation is needed. The candidates must be versed in Christian doctrine. They should know the whole catechism, and the principal parts of Bible history. Bishops in this country frequently examine the young people themselves, at least in congregations that are small,

and where there is no possibility of having a thorough and good parochial school education. When Confirmation is given to children not long after their First Communion, it may be enough to review in a few lessons the matter treated before and dwell upon a more exhaustive explanation of those points which concern the Sacrament of Confirmation in particular. With old people you must certainly be very lenient, especially if they are of the illiterate class. Just see if they know the principal dogmas and moral precepts, the ordinary prayers and the substance of the doctrine bearing on the Sacrament they are about to receive.

40. Also for Confirmation sponsors are required. Only a practical Catholic who has been confirmed himself may be chosen for this office. Parents cannot act as sponsors for their children, nor husbands for their wives, or *vice versa*. The sponsor must be of the same sex as the candidate. The rule is, that only one sponsor be chosen, and that each confirmandus have his own separate sponsor. In some dioceses, however, it has been customary to have one or two persons act as sponsors for the whole class, a man for the male, and a woman for the female parties. This custom is rather *contra rubricas*, but as long as the bishop is satisfied with this arrangement, a priest may follow such custom. But the two then chosen must be both old persons, because they contract a spiritual relationship with the confirmandi and their parents, which, in case the sponsors were young, may lead to serious troubles. The confirmandi must have a card or ticket on which their own full name and the name of the sponsor is written in distinct letters. This card they ought to hold in their hands when they kneel before the railing or throne. The priest assisting will gather up the cards, and a record of the names with other data ought either to be kept in a special book or in the baptismal register.

*Note*—The day on which the sacrament of Confirmation is administered ought to be considered a festival day

for the whole congregation. Not only the candidates, but also the rest of the people attending the service in church should wear their holiday attire. The bishop, at his arrival, must be received with external pomp (*viz.*, societies turning out in regalia with flags and banners), as is due to his rank. The local pastor ought to see that arrangements to this effect be made in time, and also in his own house he should render things as comfortable for the bishop as circumstances permit. A gathering of the priests in the neighborhood will help to contribute to the festivity.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

#### ARTICLE I.—GENERAL REMARKS.

41. The Holy Eucharist constitutes the very centre of Catholic Liturgy. It is, as it were, the focus, in which the rays of public and private worship meet, and from which all devotion amongst Christians receives its life and power, its odor and sweetness. Without the Eucharist there would be no priesthood, no real or true religion, such as God demands. By religion man is lifted up to God, and God lowers Himself down to man; a sacred bond between the Creator and the creature is thus formed. Do you wish to have an apt symbol of this mystical union, a means which at once ties the human heart and soul to the heart of his Lord and Father in heaven? You cannot find a better one than the Eucharist. This Holy of Holies is both a sacrifice and a sacrament. As a sacrifice it is the gift which we offer the Blessed Trinity, as a sacrament it is that fountain of grace which the goodness and mercy of the Most High allows to flow upon us in great abundance, that we may participate in that love which is the



very essence of the Deity, and which reigns supremely between the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The other sacraments, compared to the Eucharist, are but lesser channels of grace; in the Eucharist we have the very life-spring of grace. In it a Christian soul may have its thirst for divine things fully quenched; its hunger for spiritual manna completely satiated. "Whoever drinketh of this water," Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "shall thirst again; but he that shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall not thirst forever."

42. There is yet another striking difference between the Eucharist and the rest of the sacraments, to which the Fathers of the Council of Trent refer: "*Reliquia sacramenta tunc primum sanctificandi vim habent, quum quis iis utitur, at in Eucharistia sanctitatis auctor ante usum est.*" In Baptism, for instance, there is no sacramental existence except at the moment when the matter and form are applied, viz., when the water is poured on a person's head and the words "*Ego te baptizo etc*" are spoken. Not so in the Holy Eucharist. Far from being but a transitory action, the words of consecration constitute a permanent "*Numen Divinum.*" Our Lord and Saviour, the Man-God, Jesus Christ, is actually present there and deigns to remain there as long as the species of bread continues to exist. As in the Old Law the ark of the covenant was the object around which the whole divine service clustered, thus in the New Law the Blessed Eucharist is the mystic centre of our whole religion. However, note the difference. What was only a figure in the past has now become a reality. "*Umbram fugat veritas, noctem lux eliminat.*" (Hymn. *Pange Lingua.*) But for the Eucharist, our churches would be mere meeting places and assembly halls, through it they are real houses of God. Shall we wonder if Catholics have always tried, whenever their means permitted it, to build their churches in a gorgeous manner and on a grand scale? Nothing, indeed, can ever be too precious, too expensive in erecting a temple for the Son



of the living God. And the same must be said in regard to the furniture, utensils, vestments, etc., concerning the Eucharistic Sacrifice. A congregation, in which the people come to church dressed in silk and decked with jewels, whilst the edifice of the Most High is wanting in the most necessary things, the altars looking poor and bare, the sacerdotal vestments being old and worn, the walls, ceiling, windows, etc., appearing dilapidated, such a congregation furnishes a bad testimony against itself. There either the people or the priest, but likely both, lack faith and zeal.

43. The real presence of the Lord of heaven and earth in the Blessed Eucharist ought to urge all believers to come and to pay this King of kings their homage of respect and adoration. We should never forget that sweet invitation of our Divine Redeemer: "Come ye all to Me that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you." Kneeling right before that Most Beloved Friend who never wearies in listening to our prayers and petitions, we shall find what we seek for, viz., true happiness and contentment. In the presence of Jesus the storms of passion will be calmed, the trials of life be made easy to bear, temptation will be checked, virtue be strengthened, doubts and anxieties be dispelled. The Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore (n. 269) therefore justly remark: "*Maxime in votis habemus, ut fideles doceantur bona quamplurima ipsis obventura si Dominum sub speciebus sacramentalibus inter nos hospitem sæpius invisant. Pastoris ergo munus erit et verbis et exemplo ad hoc pientissimum officium suos incitare, atque hac ratione in omnium cordibus ignem amoris accendere et fovere erga amantissimum Servatorem, quoniam magnifice fecit, quia magnus in medio nostri Sanctus Israel.*" In almost any congregation there are some few pious souls, who by a timely hint and instruction could be induced to visit the Blessed Sacrament for a little while every day. Why not encourage them? May it not be hoped that the fervent prayers of these worshippers shall be a benefit to the whole parish,

and that they shall help especially the priest in his parochial labors? "Verba docent, exempla truhunt." The example of a few may inspire others, until you have a regular group, who, like a body guard, form a sort of elite around their sovereign. Certainly the priest must also set the example himself. Let him come to see his Divine Master often; a few spare moments for this purpose will hardly be wanting any day. Not the length of time thus spent in adoration counts, but the fervor of the heart with which the worshipper is filled. Many a priest would discharge the functions of his ministry quite differently if he entered into a closer union and a more affectionate intimacy with his Divine Master. As St. John leaned against the breast of Christ at the Last Supper, and there gained that glowing charity which made him the disciple of love, thus also a priest, having such easy access to his Saviour, should not fail to fly, as it were, into His bosom and to study the heart which loves men so tenderly. Cardinal Manning (The Eternal Priesthood, Chapt. XIII), aptly says: "Priests need, as all men do, the *solatium humanitatis*, but in seeking it they often fall into a snare. The priest's friend is Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament. And the priest is with Him morning, noon and night in continual intercourse, and a perpetual relation of love and protection on the one side, and love and service on the other."

44. Where is the Holy Eucharist to be kept? The Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore (n. 265) say: "(Eucharistia) conservari debet in ecclesia cathedrali et in quavis ecclesia parochiali, ut ad infirmos data occasione deferri possit. In aliis vero pluribus vel ecclesiis vel sacellis conservari potest vel ex lege vel ex Pontificis indulto. Qua in re Ordinarios hortamur ut curent, uti nonnisi debita præhabita licentia hoc maximo privilegio quævis ædes sacra utatur." Hence all cathedrals and all parish churches are *eo ipso* entitled to a constant keeping of the Blessed Sacrament, nay, indeed, in these places it

must be kept. By parish churches are understood those churches in which the faithful at large living within a certain district attend divine service, where in particular they receive Holy Communion, whence the Viaticum is taken to the sick, and where a priest, entrusted with the care of souls, is actually residing. Also our quasi-parochial churches, therefore, are included in that term, provided there be a resident priest having charge of them as rector. In outmissions, which are attended but occasionally, the Holy Eucharist may be kept, as long as the priest stays there, but not constantly during his absence. What about the other churches or chapels? The canons permit that the Sacred Host be kept in the chapels of those religious who are strictly cloistered, viz., who have solemn vows. Some extend this to all collegiate churches with a resident clergy, to seminaries, colleges, etc. In other churches, public or private, the Holy Eucharist cannot be licitly kept, except by a papal indult. Bishops cannot grant this privilege "*jure ordinario*." Sisterhoods, therefore, having a private oratory within their houses are not justified *eo ipso* in having the Blessed Sacrament under their roof, unless they be nuns with solemn vows. Most of our female religious in this country take only simple vows, and therefore they need a special permission. The permission, however, cannot be granted unless certain conditions are complied with, the principal ones of which are: (a), that the chapel be in a quiet part of the house, and, if possible, under a separate roof; (b), that, if under the same roof as the convent, there be no room over the chapel occupied by persons during the day or used as a sleeping room during the night; (c), that there be a priest to take charge of such chapel, and that he celebrate Mass in this chapel at least once a week.

45. What do the rubrics say about the mode of keeping the Blessed Sacrament? The Holy Eucharist must be kept in a pyx or ciborium, the cover of which closes tightly, and this vessel must be reserved in the tabernacle.

The tabernacle itself again must be locked safely. The key of the tabernacle can never be left in the hands of lay people, nor be given to religious, whether it be in their own chapel or not. The priest himself is to take care of it. The best practical way to do this is to put the key in a drawer in the sacristy, to lock this drawer and to take this key along.\* The vessel containing the sacred species (vulgo pyx) ought to be of the same material as the chalice, to-wit, of gold, silver, or, in poor churches, of tin (stannum), but in the latter case the inside should be gilt. The large Host for exposition may be either left in the ostensorium, and then the whole ostensorium be placed in the tabernacle, or it may be put into the so-called lunula, and this lunula alone be kept in the tabernacle, provided it be inclosed in some special vessel and well covered. It is a great abuse to leave the Sacred Host simply in the lunula with no cover whatsoever. Over the pyx should hang a small silk veil of white color. Both pyx and lunula require a special benediction before they are used. The tabernacle, which must always be in the middle of the altar, in a somewhat elevated position, may be constructed of any solid matter. "*Tabernaculum regulariter debet esse ligneum, extra deauratum, intus vero aliquo panno serico decenter contextum.*" (cf. Conc. Baltim. II. n. 266.) Usually, therefore, wood ought to be chosen. Whenever the material is metal or stone, the inside should be lined with wood, so as to protect the tabernacle against moisture. Besides, the whole inside must be lined with either gold cloth or white silk, we say the whole inside, not only the walls, but also the ceiling and floor. Right in the entrance a silk curtain should hang down, to keep the sacred vessels from open view. The door ought to be of great elegance and splendor. The outside of the taber-

\* cf. Lucidi (de visitatione cap. I. n. 100): Jus retinendi clavem tabernaculi in ecclesiis parochialibus privative pertinet ad parochum. Si agitur de ecclesiis monialium, clavem penes capellanum, minime vero penes ipsas residere debere decrevit S. Cong. Ep. et Reg.

nacle, according to the Roman Ritual, must be covered with a veil (*tabernaculum canopæo decenter opertum*). This veil may be of any material, and either of a white color during the whole year, or "*juxta colorem officii*," but never black, not even in a Mass for the dead or at the occasion of a funeral. Over the top of a tabernacle actually containing the Blessed Sacrament nothing can be placed except a crucifix or a figure of our Lord (Sacred Heart, or Infant Jesus). It is an abuse to make the tabernacle the pedestal of a statue of a saint (cf. Coun. Balt. II. n. 266). Neither are you allowed to put anything in it except the Holy Eucharist, no sacred oils, relics, not even empty ciboriums or ostensoriums. The tabernacle should have a quadrangular form with a sufficient space for at least two ciboriums. Revolving tabernacles are, to say the least, *præter rubricas*; they are only tolerated, and should, if possible, be done away with. The priest who has charge of a Church ought to be scrupulous in executing all these minute points and rules mentioned. They are wise regulations of the Church, which thus endeavors to confer on her Divine Bridgroom hidden under the sacramental species all the honor due to Him. He who finds these regulations too hard or too irksome, ought to bear in mind how God Himself, under the old dispensation, vouchsafed to issue many detailed rules and laws concerning the keeping of His sanctuary. And yet that was but a shadow of the things to come.

46. As long as the Eucharistic Lord dwells in His tabernacle, a lamp ought to be kept before it burning day and night. The Second Council of Baltimore (n. 267) says: "*Coram sanctissimo lampas semper accensa habeatur ex oleo olivarum nutrita vel saltem ex aliis oleis quantum fieri potest vegetalilibus.*" The oil used in this lamp ought to be olive oil, as a rule. The bishop may permit other oil, even kerosene. However, it seems at present the expense of olive oil is not so high as to be compelled to use other oil. The sanctuary lamp has a symbolical meaning.

for it signifies the God-man, Jesus, who came into this world to enlighten those that sit in darkness and the shadow of death. The priest himself is responsible for the sanctuary lamp; though he may charge his sacristan or others to attend to it, yet he should watch that this light never become extinct. Therefore, hang the lamp so that the flame cannot be easily blown out by the wind, and have the oil renewed frequently, especially during the winter season, when the frost may prevent it from burning well.

47. How often must the species be renewed? The Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore tell us (268 n.): "*Rituale Romanum jubet particulas Sanctissimæ Eucharistiæ frequenter renovari et Cæremoniale episcoporum id semel saltem in hebdomada faciendum præcepit. Hanc regulam, quam Sacra Rituum Congregatio nedum sæpius confirmavit, verum stricte et religiose obligare declaravit sacerdotibus omnibus fideliter servandam serio inculcamus.*" The species, therefore, ought to be renewed once every week, no matter whether there are few or many left. It is a sacrilegious abuse and a mortal sin to keep the same species in the tabernacle for too long a period, say six weeks or more. As a matter of course, the new altar-bread must be fresh—not older than about a week or two. The renovation of the species and the purification of the ciborium has to be performed during Mass. The celebrant, after having taken the Precious Blood, covers the chalice with the pall, opens the tabernacle, takes the ciborium, and distributes the hosts left either among the people communicating, if there be such, or consumes them all himself. This being done, he gathers the small particles remaining in the ciborium with his fingers and puts them into the chalice of the Mass. Then wine must be poured into the pyx, and the latter be turned carefully in the hand, that the wine may catch any little fragment left around the brim. This wine, however, with the fragments thus collected, you empty again into the chalice and drink it from the latter. Finally, the ciborium is wiped with



the purifier and new hosts are put in, or it is placed outside of the corporal and removed after Mass. To avoid the inconvenience of consecrating a large number of small hosts on the bare corporal together with the large host, it is advisable to have two ciboriums. The lunula must be purified in the same way as the paten of the chalice. You use only your fingers, and for this reason the lunula should be made so that it can be taken apart or be opened. Of late they have manufactured lunulas which contain a plate of glass on both sides. They are only allowed if the glass be arranged so that it does not touch the Sacred Host, the latter must be held by the metal rings alone.

48. In a church which is entitled to keep the Blessed Sacrament, it cannot be kept except in one place, in one tabernacle, and on one altar, which should be the main or high altar. "*Sanctissimum Sacramentum asservandum est uno tantum in loco cujuscumque ecclesiæ, in qua costodiri potest, solet aut debet.*" (cf. Con. Baltim. II. n. 266.) A corporal ought to be laid on the floor of the tabernacle, on which the sacred vessels stand. This corporal should be clean and in good shape. Therefore, exchange it once in a while, and do not forget to inspect the whole inside of the tabernacle from time to time to cleanse it from dust and unbecoming filth. Wherever the Blessed Sacrament is kept constantly in a church, it should be there the whole time, and not be removed except for grave reasons, say when the church or altar is under repair. Never follow the practice of those who remove the Blessed Sacrament in order to hold a performance, which they deem too profane in presence of the Eucharistic Lord, viz., lectures, concerts, fairs, etc. What you cannot well do in the church in the presence of the Sacred Host, you should not do either in its absence. The church has become a holy place by its benediction or consecration; it is a more holy place by the very fact that the Lord of heaven has chosen it for his eucharistic abode. Always have the people understand that before the Divine Majesty present



on the altar all must behave well and that no misdemeanor can be tolerated. Loud talking, shouting or other profanation must be suppressed at once. Also non-Catholics must be made to submit to this, as long as they wish to have access to our churches.

## ARTICLE II.

### SACRAMENTAL EXPOSITION AND BENEDICTION.

49. Under the old Dispensation, the Ark of the covenant, the so-called *Schechinah*, as a rule was not exposed to public view. Only the high priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies once a year. This was in accordance with the nature of the Law of Moses, fear being its fundamental character. Not so in the order of things established by Christ, which is built upon love. Far from hiding and concealing himself continually in the tabernacle, our Lord and God, who takes pleasure in being among the children of men, also wishes to be seen and to come into closer contact with his followers. The Church complying with this desire of her divine Spouse, therefore from time to time exposes the Blessed Sacrament to the eyes of the faithful. We say from time to time, because two extremes must be avoided, a too rare and a too frequent exposition. If too rare, it will not have a long or durable effect; if too frequent, it is liable to do away with the necessary respect and awe due to the Lord of heaven and earth.

50. The manner of exposing the Blessed Sacrament is twofold—public and private. It is public when the cause for which it takes place is a public one, and the Sacred Host is taken from the tabernacle and exposed to the view of the faithful in attendance and benediction given with it, before it is replaced. It is private when the cause is of a personal or private character. In this case

the Host is not taken from the tabernacle nor in any way exposed to the view of those present, but is left inclosed in the ciborium or ostensorium, which latter is covered with a white veil, and thus covered is drawn forward to the door of the tabernacle, where it remains to the end of the function, when it is replaced without giving benediction with it. “*Si quandoque privata ex causa Sacrosancta Eucharistia exponenda videbitur, a tabernaculo nunquam extrahatur, sed in pyxide velata, in aperto ejusdem tabernaculi ostiolo, cum assistentia alicujus sacerdotis, stola et superpellicio induti et cum sex saltem luminibus cereis collocetur.*” (S. C. Ep. et Reg. Dec. 9, 1602). The private exposition does not require a public cause, any reasonable motive is sufficient, and it is left to the pastor or the rector of the church to decide about this; a certain limit must be observed here, too, and it is wrong to open the tabernacle only to satisfy the desires or whims of a few pious devotees. A public exposition always demands a more or less public cause, the sole judge of which is the bishop or ordinary of the diocese. Without his special and express consent, no such exposition can take place.\* There are, however, certain days and occasions on which by a sort of custom or tradition now all bishops permit the public exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Thus the Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore (n. 375) make a general allowance when they say that exposition and benediction may be had once a day on all Sundays and Holy days of obligation, on all feasts of the first and second class, every day during a mission, twice a week during Lent, twice a day (at Mass and at Vespers) during the

\* Benedict XIV in his constitution “*Accepimus*” says: *Certissimum est huic Sedi Apostolicæ in quibuscumque ecclesiis etiam privilegio immunibus sive saecularibus sive regularibus, non licere exponi publice divinam Eucharistiam nisi causa publica et Episcopi facultas intervenerit.*

octave of Corpus Christi.\* In the same passage is also added: "Quodsi ordini alicui religioso vel societati Sancta Sedes aliquid amplius indulserit, illud omnino incolume esse volumus. Extra autem hujusmodi privilegium, de quo certum Ordinario exhibeatur documentum, nolumus benedictionem dari vel expositionem fieri nisi prout supra venia Ordinarii expressa salvis etiam in omnibus S. Congregationis Rituum hac in re decretis." You must certainly see to it that all is done "debita reverentia et debito obsequio." Therefore do not give benediction if you have no choir or if the vestments (cope, velum, etc.), and other articles (incense) are wanting. Also a considerable number of attendants is required. A dozen of school children or a few sisters are certainly not enough.

51. Special attention is called by the Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore to the Forty Hours' prayer. "Ac profecto nemo, qui naturam hujus devotionis bene perpenderit, inficiabitur, ea rite servata, fidem saluberrimam, qua Regem gloriæ ac supremum Dominum sub humili Sacramenti hujus velamine delitescentem agnoscimus ac profitemur in Christi fidelium animis firmiter roborari et suavissime nutriri et augeri aliosque optimos in vitæ spiritualis commodum et emolumentum fructus percipi ubberimos." (n. 376). This solemn mode of worshiping the Eucharistic Lord, which in the beginning was but a local usage, has now become universal in the Church, and is a favorite devotion of our Catholic people. It may be held any time during the year; however the rector of the church must have the express permission of the ordinary. Besides all must be done strictly according to the rubrics. These rubrics are contained in the brief issued by Pope Clement XII. (cf. *Instructio Clementina* in Schneider's

\* His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII., furthermore has permitted ■ public benediction and exposition in all parochial churches during the whole month of October up to and including All Souls' Day, in connection with the public recital of the Rosary.

“Manuale Sacerdotum” and also the “Manual of Forty Hours Prayer,” published by the Americ. Eccles. Review). *Per se* the regulations laid down there are obligatory only in Rome, but it is highly desirable that, as far as possible, they be observed elsewhere, too; nay, indeed, some essential features cannot be omitted at all, they are *de praecepto* as otherwise the indulgences would be lost and a fraud be committed against the people. Gardellini says: “Quaedam ea (instructio) continet, quae quum sint generalia et ad essentiam pertineant cultus Eucharistiae debiti nedum Romae in sola oratione quadraginta horarum sed etiam alibi in aliis omnibus expositionibus quae per annum fiunt servanda omnino sunt.” It is absolutely necessary that the adoration continue for forty hours in succession, day and night. Local circumstances sometimes, however, are so that it is impossible to do this. Then the Holy See grants a modification or change of the rule to bishops asking for it. Thus the Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore have petitioned the Roman authorities, that the exposition may take place only during the day time, and that the procession with the Blessed Sacrament (even intra septa ecclesiae) may be omitted wheresoever it cannot be held conveniently. To this petition an answer has been given in the affirmative. (cf. Conc. Baltim. decr. VII.) Also the request that the indulgences otherwise conceded may remain intact, has been granted. Therefore as long as the privilege is in vogue, and as long as the reasons in view of which it has been forwarded exist (durantibus temporum locorumque peculiaribus circumstantiis) in the United States, the Forty Hours’ prayer may be arranged so as to cover three days in succession. In the evening the Blessed Sacrament is replaced in the tabernacle and the adoration is suspended during the night following, to be resumed early the next day. Care, however, must be taken that the whole time thus spent in adoration really amounts to forty hours completely. Therefore also during the sermons preached, there must be some

few kneeling constantly before the Blessed Sacrament engaged in praying or adoring. The indulgences which may be gained by those who attend this exercise are: (a), a plenary indulgence to such as receive the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion, and visit the church of the exposition, praying at the same time according to the intention of the Holy See; (b), a partial indulgence of ten years and ten quadrages for every visit, even if the sacraments are not received, but the prayers must then be said. Formerly a whole hour of adoration was required, but by a papal decree of Pope Paul V. it has been left optional to make it shorter (*qui per aliquod temporis spatium, devote interfuerint*). It is of importance to inform the people well about the whole matter. Therefore, whenever you wish to have the Forty Hours' prayer in your church, announce it early enough (two or three Sundays ahead), also in a previous sermon explain to your parishioners the beauty and object of this solemnity. Besides, you must not spare any pains and expenses, as far as circumstances allow, to render the occasion as glorious and as impressive as you can. Therefore have the church, the altars, the tabernacle or throne richly adorned, but so that there is no fault committed against the rubrics. All attempts in displaying extraordinary solos in singing by the choir, electric illuminations around the Blessed Sacrament, in short, such things that simply attract the crowd, but which do not foster devotion, ought to be avoided. Do not forget besides inviting the whole congregation, to engage special parties for a fixed hour, so that the Eucharistic Lord be never left alone, but always have a sufficient number of worshipers gathered around His throne. A complete and suitable arrangement to this effect must be made beforehand. Divide the hours between the different portions (men, women, young men, young ladies, school children, societies) of the parish and let them know exactly at what time they are expected to be present. Let them all be cautious to observe the greatest devotion and decorum

before the Sacred Host; tolerate no talking, laughing or unbecoming posture of the body, no disturbance in going in and out. Have the doors of the church constantly closed to prevent derision of the Blessed Sacrament by parties who pass along the street. Usually the people come to confession at this occasion in large crowds; one priest is hardly able to meet the needs of them; it is right to invite a sufficient number of priests in the neighborhood, that they may help both in preaching and especially in hearing confessions. The sermons must be in correspondence with the occasion, and not too frequent or too long (half an hour at most), as this would be against the object of the solemnity. As a matter of course, the clergy must not fail to give a good example to the laity either. Let them appear in the sanctuary before their Divine Lord and pray as often as their work permits. It is a great abuse for clergymen to make the Forty Hours' prayer the occasion for a frolic among themselves, to choose the spare hours for playing cards or similar amusements in the priesthouse, whilst the pious Catholic people are singing and praying in the church. We may justly address to these pleasure-seeking priests the words of our Saviour: "*Cavete, ne scandalizetis unum ex his pusillis.*"

52. There are other expositions of the Blessed Sacrament called the triduum and the thirteen hours' adoration. They are similar to the Forty Hours' prayer, but they differ in this that they cannot be held except on certain days, viz.: the week of Septuagesima or Sexagesima, or the three days preceding Ash Wednesday. The one day or thirteen hours' exposition takes place only on the Thursday in the week of Sexagesima. The object of the Forty Hour prayer is to implore the blessing of peace and harmony amongst Christian nations. The object of the triduum is to keep the faithful from attending the sinful festivities of the carnival, and to stay the hand of the just God from inflicting punishment on account of the degrading occurrences during these days. For the triduum no number of

hours is required, for the one day's exposition, precisely thirteen hours. The plenary indulgence granted for these adorations is the same as for the Forty Hours' prayer, but at the triduum the visit must be made three times. No partial indulgences are granted, except those which may be gained by any worship of the Blessed Sacrament. Taking into consideration all that in these few lines has been said concerning this devotion, it is evident that a pastor of souls ought to make sufficient efforts to give his flock the benefit of a public adoration from time to time. We are of the opinion that no congregation, be it ever so small, which has a resident priest, could not afford to arrange it. If they are not able to spend three days, as in the Forty Hours' prayer or the triduum, let them make use of the one day's or thirteen hours' exposition. Where there is a will there is a way. A priest whose heart burns with love for his Lord and Master in the Holy Eucharist will find means to overcome all obstacles in this regard. He himself shall reap the fruit of his zeal. Such a public exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, when carried on properly is wont to bring the people to a higher standard of virtue and may have the same if not a better and more lasting effect than a mission.

### ARTICLE III.

#### HOLY COMMUNION.

53. It is a significant fact that our Blessed Redeemer in the very announcement he made concerning the eucharistic gift, which he had in store for mankind, laid a special emphasis on the spiritual food this Mystery of love was to contain. "The bread which I will give," he said, "is My flesh for the life of the world." Then the crowd began to murmur, but the Lord continued saying: "Except you



eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." "My flesh is meat, indeed, and My blood is drink, indeed." The main cause and principal motive therefore, why Jesus was pleased to institute the Holy Eucharist, was that thus he might become the nourishment of our soul; that at the sacred banquet, to which Christians are admitted, divine love might reach its climax and triumph in the highest manner conceivable. The food we take in eating and drinking is assimilated to our body, and changed into the very substance of our flesh and blood, so as to become one and the same with it. The eucharistic Bread has a like effect in regard to our souls, but with this difference that our spiritual nature is assimilated to the divine nature hidden under the sacramental species without losing its own essence. On the contrary, as in the Incarnation, the two natures remained intact but united in one personality, thus in a Christian, eating of the Bread of Life in the Blessed Sacrament, the Creator and the creature, God and man enter into a close alliance formed by divine love. "*O res mirabilis, manducat Dominum pauper servus et humilis.*" (Hymnus matut. Officii Euchar.). The effects of this wonderful and intimate union have never been wanting. The lives of the saints and the history of the Church bear testimony of it. When Renan, some three decenaries ago, had published his infamous book, "The Life of Christ," another French writer undertook to refute him by simply narrating the miraculous and astounding effects which Holy Communion had produced throughout various ages in the souls of the faithful. The refutation was successful in as far as it furnished a sufficient proof for the Godhead of Christ. Both the ascendancy and the decline of faith and morals are marked in ecclesiastical history by an increase or decrease in receiving Holy Communion. It is certainly a lamentable thing that the value of this holy food and the wholesome effects of it are not quite well understood and realized by many Catholics. No pastor, indeed, should

fail to explain this matter again and again to his flock. "Quapropter in hoc praecepue boni pastoris incumbat studium, ut oves esca hac coelesti et divina alantur reficianturque, ut corpore Domini nutritae Spiritu Ejus vivant. (cf. Con. Baltim. II. n. 254).

54. Holy Communion may be administered any day except on Good Friday, the hour is limited to the same hour as the celebration of Mass. The distribution may take place either during Mass, which is the original and more proper mode, or outside of the holy Sacrifice. In the latter case the priest must be vested in surplice and stole (juxta colorem officii). Leaving apart the special rubrics to be observed in this act (books of liturgy ought to be consulted about it), we wish to add the following. Whenever you distribute the sacred species amongst the people, do it with the utmost reverence, so as to inspire devotion and respect. Never hurry, but walk slowly down the steps of the altar and along the railing. Say the prayers (*Miserere*, etc.), aloud and distinctly. Do not scold parties who appear awkward, publicly, or in a brusque way. See that all communicants, if there be many, approach in an orderly manner, not in a rush or pushing one another. Have them hold the communion cloth well under their chin and make the genuflections well. If you happen to notice things which are not proper, hold your temper and speak about such matters afterwards, either to private parties whom it concerns, or publicly from the pulpit. Guard your fingers well from becoming moistened by touching the tongue of the communicant. If, however, they should have become so moistened (*viz.*, the inside of the thumb and the index) that you could not remove the adhering particles into the ciborium, or hold the sacred species properly, go to the altar and purify them in the vessel specially set apart for that purpose. If you should be compelled to break a host, there not being enough for all, return to the altar, do it right there on the *mensa altaris*, and then come back to the railing.

55. Holy Communion demands due preparation, both as to soul and as to body. The preparation of the soul is again remote and proximate. The remote preparation requires that the recipient be in the state of grace, that if ever his conscience be loaded with mortal guilt, he first make a good and sincere confession, and by sacramental absolution be clothed again with the wedding garment the gospel speaks of in the parable of the marriage feast. This point is well understood by the people. However, if perchance you should be compelled to refuse absolution in the confessional, it may be proper to warn the penitent against receiving, as there are sometimes "homines rudes" who believe there is no objection to communion, as long as they have been simply to confession. A good many are also wanting in what is called proximate preparation. A person wishing to partake of the angelic Bread ought to dispose his heart by previous acts of divers virtues, faith, hope, love, desire, contrition, etc. A short time (at least fifteen minutes) ought to be spent in silent prayer immediately before approaching the railing. Likewise, after receiving, the communicant should remain in church for a while (again at least fifteen minutes) and make a good thanksgiving. People sometimes are very ignorant, it seems, about this. As soon as Mass is over, or as soon as the priest has retired to the sacristy, they leave the church and mingle in wordly conversation. Therefore, do not forget to remind them of their duty and let them know that under no circumstances could such detestable practices be tolerated. "*Moneantur praeterea communicantes ut sumpto sacramento, non statim ab Ecclesia discedant aut colloquantur ne statim vagis oculis circumspiciant aut expuant, neque de libro statim orationes recitent, ne sacramenti species de ore decidant, sed qua par est, devotione aliquantisper in oratione permanent, gratias agentes Deo de tam singulari beneficio atque etiam de sanctissima Passione Dominica in cujus memo-*"

riam hoc mysterium celebratur et sumitur" (Rituale Romanum).

56. Also, as to the body, something is necessary. Thus every one knows that he must be fasting from the midnight previous. Furthermore, the communicant must be humble and modest in his exterior bearing. With his hands folded, his eyes cast down, with a graceful, slow and devout step he ought to walk up the aisle, kneel down reverently, devoutly take the Sacred Host, and return in the same manner. If you happen to notice frequent failings in regard to such matters, then occasionally tell the people, in a gentle way, without hurting their feelings, what are the rules of propriety in connection with receiving. Grown folks may be slow in grasping the matter, therefore be the more careful in instructing children and youths. One point not to be overlooked, either, is the dress of the communicant. Women must not exhibit all sorts of vanities in the latest style and fashion, still less should their dress be indecent. In the latter case, the priest is even directed to pass by them and not to give them Holy Communion at all. Male parties must not approach without a coat, simply in their shirt sleeves. Also inform them that it is not proper to smoke or chew tobacco before communion, to spit immediately after, etc. All such abuses, if they should have crept in, must be done away with gradually; with a little prudence and patience you will succeed in bringing about a wholesome change in time.

57. How often should Catholics partake of the sacred banquet? Aside of the ecclesiastical precept as to the paschal communion, no general rule can be given. Only this much is certain, a pastor of souls should rather be inclined to foster frequent communion than to deter the faithful from it under the pretext that the ordinary class of people is hardly worthy and disposed to eat often of the heavenly Manna. The latter practice savors too much of Jansenism. Thus a quarterly and even monthly

communion should never be refused to those who are disposed enough to receive sacramental absolution. A weekly communion may be permitted to all such as earnestly endeavor to avoid mortal sin. Indeed, even those who through an old, inveterate habit yet fall back into grave disorders cannot justly be deprived of the eucharistic food once a week, if such be the ordinary and almost sole means of amendment. An exception in this last case I would only make with individuals who have given great public scandal by a loose life, and who, although now they have repented, have not yet by a truly pious life acquired a better reputation. A more frequent communion (several times a week or daily) ought to be granted to those only who seriously strive after perfection, who, as a rule, do not commit even voluntary venial sins. Although this cannot be well decided except in the confessional, yet a priest ought to have regard to the external life of such penitents and be on his guard against deception. There are sometimes persons who, when they approach the tribunal of Penance, accuse themselves of but slight imperfections, and still, in their external behavior, do many a thing that is quite unbecoming, nay, indeed, scandalous. They confound the end with the means. Frequent communion alone is not piety; it is only instrumental towards acquiring piety. Piety itself consists in the exercise of the Christian virtues, viz., charity, humility, justice, obedience, etc. Gold and silver are tried and cleansed, when thrown into the fire, but coal and other combustible matter are reduced to ashes. Thus, also, a soul with genuine virtue in the furnace of love, in Holy Communion, will be purified from all dross; imaginary saints and false devotees, however, by a frequent use of the Holy Eucharist, may be hardened in their sins.

6. Our Lord and Saviour, when promising to us the eucharistic gift, added the warning: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." Hence there is a divine law com-

manding us to partake of the heavenly banquet at various times during life. Lest somebody be lax in interpreting this law, the Church has ordained that each and every one who is sufficiently advanced in age and discretion shall partake of this heavenly food at least once a year, and this during the Paschal time. Strictly speaking, that time covers only two weeks, viz., from Palm Sunday to Low Sunday. However, in consideration of local circumstances and difficulties, it has been extended more or less in divers regions and countries. Thus, for the United States, by a general privilege granted through the Second Council of Baltimore, it lasts from the first Sunday in Lent until Trinity Sunday inclusively. The precept is of great importance, so much so, indeed, that a grave neglect not only constitutes a mortal sin, but offers reason enough not to consider such a person any longer a practical Catholic, to exclude him from all Catholic societies, not to entrust him with an ecclesiastical office, viz., trustee, sexton, etc.; even to have him excommunicated by the bishop. There being no canonical parishes in the United States, people are at liberty to receive Holy Communion in any church, though it is advisable to do so in their so-called parochial Church. The priest who has charge of souls is bound to watch and to see that every member of his flock comply well with the ecclesiastical commandment, or make his Easter duty, as it is commonly called. No effort and means should be spared on his part for such purpose. In particular we may be allowed to suggest the following:

(a) Call the attention of the people at large to their duty, when the Paschal time has arrived, and again when the season expires, when the limit is at hand.

(b) Urge those whom you suspect as not being ready or willing to receive the Holy Sacrament, privately; that is to say, visit them at their homes, in their offices or shops, see what difficulties are in the way, try to remove them.

(c) Make it a point during the Paschal season to



preach one or more sermons on Holy Communion, explaining in detail its necessity, its advantages, the mode of preparation, of thanksgiving, etc.; also a sermon on the sacrilegious communion should not be omitted.

(*d*) Be ready to hear confessions at any time, not only on Sundays and Saturdays, but also on week days, and let the people know of this.

(*e*) Have a strange priest in your place once or twice, in order that parties who feel a reluctance in confessing to their own pastor, may obtain all the chance possible of confessing to another, to whom they are not personally known. The easiest way to effect this and to prevent sacrilegious confessions and communions is to change with one of your neighboring priests on a Sunday, or to have a mission, a forty hours' devotion, etc., and invite strangers to help in the confessional.

(*f*) Do not forget to bring Holy Communion to the homes of those who are sick and feeble, or otherwise unable to come to church. Persons of this kind, however, must remain fasting, unless the sickness be dangerous, so that they might receive the Viaticum.

(*g*) Visit the public institutions, viz., poor houses, hospitals, asylums, prisons, etc., which are situated within your district. There may be Catholic inmates who, on account of infirmity, old age, want of clothes, cannot well come to church. If so, you must attend to them right there in the place they live. When they amount to quite a number, the bishop may allow to have Mass celebrated in a house of that kind and thus enable them to perform their Easter duty. Sometimes whole settlements of Catholic families (a dozen or more) may be situated at quite a distance from the church and not have it in their power to come in to receive the Sacraments during the entire Paschal season. Then the pastor must make other provisions for them; either go out to that neighborhood to say Mass in a private house, or at least hear their confessions, and distribute Holy Communion amongst them.



## ARTICLE IV.

## FIRST COMMUNION OF CHILDREN.

58. The day of First Communion forms a landmark in the life of a Catholic. The seed sown in Baptism is supposed to have borne fruit. Under the tender care of a good and pious parent the child has grown up in faith and virtue. However, the soul hitherto has been only a closed bud as it were, now it opens like a flower on a bright summer morning in its full beauty, to drink in the new light of grace and love hidden in the Holy Eucharist. The day of First Communion is a day of joy and charm for the young folks, who then are made recipients of that great celestial gift for which they had been longing with anxiety and fervor. It is a day of jubilation for their parents, who then see their cares sufficiently rewarded, and who participate in the honors bestowed upon their little ones. It is a day of importance for the whole parish, the elder members of which cannot help but look with pride and elation upon the rising generation. It is a day of consolation, last, but not least, for the priest who then beholds his long work of hard toil and tedious labor crowned with success. Although his heart may be worried by the thought that not all shall persevere, yet he may hope that many, nay, most of those who kneel before him in the innocence and loving simplicity of blooming youth, will remain faithful. And feeling like a child amongst those children, whom for the first time he leads and presents before his Lord, he may be able to say with his Divine Master at the Last Supper: "*Desiderio desideravi manducare hoc Pascha vobiscum.*"

59. At what age should children be admitted to First Communion? There is no universal ecclesiastical law fixing a precise time. The Church only wishes that children should partake of the eucharistic food as soon as they have reached the age of discretion, so as to know perfectly well

what they are about to do, when they approach the table of the Lord. Provincial councils and diocesan synods have made attempts to define the limit more closely. Thus with us the Second Council of Baltimore says that under existing circumstances the following rule, which, however, admits of exceptions, may be adopted, viz: "*Neminem ordinarie loquendo ante decimum annum Angelorum panis participem fieri debere nec post annum quartum decimum cuivis caetero digno negandum*" (n. 261). It seems to be in accordance with this decree, if pastors in this country choose ordinarily the age of twelve or thereabout, in admitting children to their First Communion.\* We beg to observe, however, that when a child is in imminent danger of death, a much younger age, say nine, eight, or even less years, ought to suffice to give him the Holy Viaticum. In such a case not only the ecclesiastical precept, but the divine law urges us to partake of the angelic Bread. All that then is required is a somewhat distinct knowledge as to the nature of this spiritual food, which knowledge, by a brief instruction, may be instilled into the mind of the dying child. "*Male se gererent, nec leviter dereliquerent sacerdotes, si pueros perspicacis ingenii sine viatico e vivis excedere sinerent, ea inepta moti ratione, quod nunquam antea ad eucharisticam mensam fuerint admissi. Si qui igitur pueri nondum satis edocti periculose decumbant, eos divini hujus mysterii notitia imbuere studeant neque dubitent illis divinum hunc cibum praebere, si divinum panem satis a vulgari discernere didice-*

\* "In this regard it may be necessary to remember, that our people in the United States are of many races. The children of German or Scandinavian stock develop intellectually and morally slower than the children of the Celtic and Italic races. Again, there are children who go to public or to non-catholic private schools, whose mental constitution, owing to their training differs from that of children who receive daily religious instruction in the parish school. Others are sent to work before they have reached maturity, in order that they may help to earn a scanty living for their families. All these considerations will effect the choice as to the age which a pastor makes of the young candidates for admission to the Holy Table." (*Americ. Ecclesiastic. Review*, Dec. 1895.)

rint, atque aliquo erga illum pietatis sensu affici cognoverint" (cf. Conc. Baltim. II. n. 261).

60. The question of the age being duly settled, we may ask next, what preparations must be made to render the young catechumens fully equipped for the great event? We must distinguish a twofold preparation—a preparation of the mind and a preparation of the heart. Again, either of them is remote and proximate. The remote preparation, both as to mind and as to heart, may be summed up as follows: Let us suppose that the children of the congregation attend a parochial school; then a devoted and zealous pastor, right in the beginning of the scholastic year, ought to pay a visit to the school rooms and single out those of his young flock whom so far he deems fit and worthy to make their First Communion during the coming season. When he has found those who give a fair promise, he must take them under his special care, so as to impress them with the idea that they are to do a great thing in the near future. In the ordinary catechetical instructions, whether in school or in church, these children should be examined more closely, they should be made more thoroughly acquainted with the doctrines of faith and morals, especially such as refer to the Sacraments. Moreover, they ought to be told that in their behavior at home and in school, towards their parents, their teachers, their classmates, they must be more careful, more edifying than perhaps they may have been before. The examples of our Lord in His boyhood, and of such Saints as St. Aloysius, St. Stanislaus, St. Francis of Sales, St. Theresa, and others, may be placed before them. Furthermore, exhort them to pray well, especially at Mass and Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, that the Lord Jesus, hidden in the Sacred Host, may help them to dispose their hearts for His coming. Finally, when they present themselves for their quarterly confession, speak to the conscience of these young penitents with all the emotion and unction of a true shepherd, so as to arouse

in their souls the proper sentiments. Such occasional allusions, if made at the right time, and in a becoming way, either in public or in private, will remind these little ones that the eye of their pastor is watching them, and put them into the proper temper for the regular ordeal or proximate preparation.

61. The proximate preparation, as far as the mental equipment is concerned, consists in imparting such knowledge of our holy religion which at that age and occasion these children should be gifted with. To meet this purpose it will be necessary to start a special class of first communicants, that thus they may receive a formal and more thorough instruction at a special hour, and this should be done at least six or eight weeks ahead of the date appointed for the reception of the Sacrament. One hour each day, or at least every other day, they must then be taught. The whole catechism should be gone through once more, what they have learned before, be repeated and explained on a larger scale, since it is frequently the last year they spend in school. The last weeks must be occupied with instructions on the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance in particular. They ought to be prepared also for a general confession. When the class is large, it is not advisable to have this general confession on the eve of the First Communion, but a week or two ahead. Also invite another priest, a stranger, to help you in hearing these confessions, so that there is perfect liberty of conscience and no one be tempted to conceal sins.

62. From the very moment that the class of first communicants has been started, and during the whole time whilst it is progressing, hand in hand with the mental equipment, also the hearts of the children must be disposed and be prepared as fit abodes for the King of Heaven. The catechetical instructions, far from being dry recitations, ought to be interwoven with continual exhortations and pious thoughts, so as to arouse loving sentiments and holy affections in the souls of

the young listeners. The instructions must be made attractive in a manner that the attendants instinctively feel the sacred awe which, like a mysterious shadow, overhangs. We do not deny that this work of preparation requires more than ordinary skill. But there is no reason to despair. Let every priest, to whom it has fallen as a lot to teach a First Communion class, do his very best, then the Lord Almighty will not fail to supply the necessary grace. For this grace, indeed, a priest having charge of children's souls should constantly pray. Let him often beseech his Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament to inspire him with the right thoughts and sentiments, that he may be a fit and worthy instrument in leading the little ones to their Master and Divine Friend. All the pains taken in this so great and important work will earn for the priest of God, imbued with the right spirit and led by a proper intention, an abundance of merits in heaven, and even here beneath fill his heart with the choicest consolations.\*

63. We believe that the communicants should go to confession once a week from the very moment that the special class has been started. It helps them to realize the evil which sin involves and the necessity of thoroughly cleansing their souls for the great act. The confessor will have an opportunity to correct certain bad dispositions, such as anger, stubbornness, disobedience, lying, impurity. The will of the child may be urged by shaping the still

\* We may be allowed to quote the words of Bishop Dupanloup: "Nothing to me is to be compared to the recollections I have of the weekly catechisms (preceding first communion). No preaching however eloquent, no ministry however consoling equals this one, for there one sees more clearly than any where else the beautiful work of God in human souls, the true nobility, the divine foundation there is in each one; the awakening of all that is best in their natures, the struggle between good and evil, in which one sees the strength and tenderness of God's mysterious power and action on each individual soul, and that at an age, when impressions are the strongest and the most lasting besides, for all the hopes and fears of the future are there."

impressionable mould of the heart. Sparks of good qualities and dormant sentiments of piety may be fanned into a burning flame of holy enthusiasm. The penitential absolution itself, the grace of the Sacrament, finally will wash the little souls from all stain long before the great day arrives, so that then they may appear as spotless lambs before the Divine Shepherd.

64. Right at the opening of the class the children must be exhorted anew to redouble their zeal in prayer, in good behavior, in mortification. Still, you ought to do it so as not to create a distaste for these things, because then the affair may be looked upon with a sort of prejudice, as a restraint to be shaken off, as soon as the day of First Communion is past. Lead the children to church yourself every time the class is over, and for about five or ten minutes say a few prayers before the Blessed Sacrament with them, not only prayers as you find them in books, but spontaneous expressions of the heart. Watch them closely as to their whole deportment, that they move slowly, genuflect devoutly. As far as mortification is concerned, all extremes must be avoided. It is much better to ask easy and few things, which they can attend to with joy, than difficult and many actions, which they may feel to undergo only with reluctance. For instance, tell them that on one day of the week, say on Friday, they may restrain their appetite a little by curtailing their dinner to three-quarters of an ordinary meal or by refusing delicacies (cakes, fruit, etc.), offered to them, all for the love of Jesus. Also remind them that they (the girls especially) should not think so much of their dress, and new clothes, of their presents, etc. This will curb their pride and ambition.

65. When the six or eight weeks of catechetical instruction are over, and all have been duly examined as to their knowledge of Christian doctrine, the day of First Communion approaching, the necessity of concentrating the attention of the children upon the great event increases.



For this purpose they should take part in religious exercises or make a kind of retreat under the immediate supervision of the pastor. These exercises should not extend over more than three days, and last a few (two or three) hours in the morning and again in the afternoon. In the morning they must all assist at Mass. The rest of the time must be distributed between meditations, spiritual reading, examination of conscience, way of the Cross, recitation of the Rosary, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, etc. Also for relaxation or recess some time must be allowed. The meditations must not be too long; half an hour's meditation, we believe, is enough—one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Besides, it is of importance to accommodate yourself to the capacity of mind of the hearers. Hence, avoid all high-sounding words, all abstract theories, rather awaken the attention by little stories and examples chosen from the lives of the saints. During this retreat the children should observe perfect silence, at least as long as they are in and around the church. Also encourage them to keep up the spirit of recollection as far as possible at home. The parents, too, should be warned the Sunday previous from the pulpit not to disturb their little ones too much during these days, or overburden them with work that may distract them, still less expose them to sinful dangers and occasions. Not unfrequently parents are careless on this point and show not much foresight. The spiritual exercises, in order to be fruitful, must be carried on by a priest, and, as a rule, by the pastor himself; only things of minor importance, viz., the reading, recitation of the Rosary, may be left to sisters and school teachers. What must not be neglected, is an accurate drilling in the different ceremonies to be observed. Show the children how to walk up the aisle of the church to the altar or railing, how to fold their hands, to hold their head, to genuflect, etc. Such drilling may be attended to either before the retreat or whilst the retreat is going on during the free time.



66. What is to be done on the First Communion day itself? First of all, see to it that the church edifice (at least as to the interior), and in particular the altars, be well decorated, just as befits the occasion. Loving hands to attend to this work will hardly be wanting in any congregation. The communicants will meet at a fixed hour in the school room or in the parlor of the priest-house (in out missions where there is neither, any Catholic house close by will do), and thence march to the church in a body, first boys, next girls. Their suits or dresses should be as much as possible alike, and they ought to be informed on this matter early enough so as to avoid all inconveniences and improper fashions. Having arrived in church, they will take the places assigned to them, viz: the first row of pews near the sanctuary. Mass is then commenced and ought to be a High Mass, if it can be done, even with some expense (for instance extra pay for the organist, extra engagement of choir, etc.). As to the hour of Mass, be careful not to overtax the children too much, they not being used to long fasting, and being weakened by the strain of the previous exercises. Therefore, let the Mass be early and the whole service not too long. After the Gospel make but a short address, congratulate the young folks on the arrival of this happy hour they have wished for so long, then do the same to the parents and remind them of the obligation they now have to watch over these innocent souls, which have been chosen as His spouses by the Lord Jesus Christ. This address being over, the catechumens ought to make a profession of their faith according to a fixed formula with questions and answers as may be found in little books arranged for that purpose, and with which each child should be provided. At the offertory they are supposed to offer their candles, in the same way as is done during the Mass for ordination. We deem it advisable, too, that they recite some prayers in a chorus in preparation for Communion, viz., the acts of faith, hope, love, etc., at which reciting a teacher, a sister,

or some elderly person of the parish may preside. The most proper way for the children to receive seems to be at the altar and not at the railing, at least when the number is not too large. It will make a deeper impression, and add to the solemnity, to have them enter the sanctuary two by two, supposing, of course, that they have been drilled well and do all things gracefully. Holy Communion having been given to all, the first moments till the end of Mass should be spent in silent adoration and thanksgiving. After Mass, however, whilst people may begin to leave the church, it is desirable to keep the communicants yet a little while (five to ten minutes) and make them recite, sentence by sentence, some prayers or acts aloud and in common, by which they express their gratitude and devotion to the Saviour now dwelling in their hearts. Not before this has been done, they will move and march out again in a procession to the school room or other place, from which they had started. Having arrived there, they will be dismissed to go home. In the afternoon, however, they must assemble again to take part in Vespers and Benediction, or any other divine service which the pastor may deem fit to hold. That being over, it may be proper to enroll the communicants into the confraternity of the scapular or some other sodality of the Blessed Virgin. Then you address them again with a few apt farewell remarks and also give them a picture, a memorial card, or some other souvenirs (medals, beads, etc.), of their First Communion. This last act, however, should, if possible, take place in a hall, school room, or priest's house.

67. What we have said thus far concerning the preparation for First Communion refers principally to children in our parochial schools. Unfortunately, however, there are still many congregations in which there is no school of that kind yet, and possibly will not be, either, for the near future. The children in such places, then, are supposed to go to a non-Catholic or to a public school. Their needs deserve our attention all the more because they are

greater. Hence, whensoever it can be done, these children should, during six or eight weeks, as it may be, stay away from school altogether, because the catechetical instructions, of which up to that period they may have received very little, take, indeed, their time and energy much more than is the case with children in parochial schools. If they cannot conveniently miss school, the pastor must arrange the hours of instruction so as not to interfere with school work. Children who live in rural districts, too far off (ten or more miles) as to enable them to come to town and church and attend a First Communion class regularly, ought to be allowed to board near by to give them a chance of a daily instruction. If the parents are too poor to pay for the board, the pastor should perform a work of charity and pay for it himself, or induce some wealthy parties of the congregation to do it. The same may be said in cases where the parents are not able to procure the necessary outfit (*viz.*, clothing, etc.), for a child otherwise old enough to make its First Communion. A zealous priest will not shrink from personal and pecuniary sacrifices.

68. A very severe trial your pastoral zeal may have to undergo when you meet with certain stray sheep. Thus sometimes you find grown-up boys and girls to the age of twenty or more that have not made their First Communion yet. These, if they are detained by work or in any other way from attending the regular class, must be instructed privately in the same way as is done with converts. The saddest cases, however, are those children whose parents are only nominal Catholics, and who, misled by carelessness, prejudice, false ambition, etc., send their offspring to a public or non-Catholic school, though there is a good Catholic parochial school in the place. With some pastors it is a rule never to admit any such children to First Communion until they have attended the parochial school for at least one year. This demand certainly is not unreasonable in itself, but we doubt whether, under all circumstances, it could be carried into effect. The gross ignor-

ance of such children, the difficulty of getting them together, the indifference or bad example they witness at their homes and the evil influence thus exercised upon their souls, may be a very sore trial to a priest's heart. The first temptation, undoubtedly, is to abandon these unfortunate children altogether and to cast the responsibility for their loss on their parents. But to yield to this temptation would be wrong and be wanting in the love of a true shepherd. The example of our Lord and His Apostles teach us differently. They again and again preached the gospel to the descendants of the house of Israel, although it seemed and actually was with many a hopeless task. With kindness and unwearied patience therefore a pastor ought to treat these stray sheep, he ought to search for them and not wait until they come on their own accord; he ought to start a separate class for them, if they be many, to give them special instructions if they do not get along so well with the other children, whose religious education, thanks to the parochial school training, is more advanced. After they have been duly prepared, and been found disposed, Holy Communion cannot be refused to them simply because the parents are negligent and careless, because it is wrong to make the child suffer for the faults of his father and mother. Who knows, perhaps such a child may in God's wise decrees yet be destined as an instrument of bringing back his parents to their duty.

As to the time or day set apart for first communion, nothing definite can be said. Wheresoever there are diocesan regulations determining the exact date, these must be observed. Otherwise it is proper to choose a day during the Easter season, so that the children, who are supposed to be of the required age, may also attend to their duty of paschal Communion. In some congregations it is customary not to admit them till late in June or the beginning of July, at the time when the school closes. When a priest attends an outmission or several of them, he must

also set apart a certain season during which the children at such stations may have an opportunity to be prepared for their first Communion.\*

## ARTICLE V.

### THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

69. It is a dogma "*de fide tenendum*" that the Holy Eucharist is not only a sacrament, to be taken as a spiritual food in Holy Communion, but also a sacrifice, to be offered in Holy Mass. "*Si quis dixerit in Missa non offerri Deo verum et proprium sacrificium aut quod offeri non sit aliud quam nobis Christum ad manducandum dari, anathema sit.*" (cf. Conc. Trid. sess. XXII., c. 1.). Without entering into a detailed discussion about the particular action or mode in which the sacrificial character manifests itself, such as is given in dogmatic theology or liturgy, we may briefly say this much: It is in and through the consecration that Jesus Christ, the Godman, offers Himself mystically to His heavenly Father. There exists an innermost connection between this oblation and the one which took place on Calvary. The Sacrifice of the Mass is a representation or reproduction of the Sacrifice of the Cross, the greatest and most sublime act of worship which has ever occurred on earth. "*Una eademque est hostia,*" says the Conc. Trident, "*idem nunc offerens sacerdotum ministerio, qui seipsum tunc in cruce obtulit, sola offerendi ratione diversa.*" In Holy Mass we possess a means most perfect and most wonderful to render an adequate

\* The following books may be suitable to a priest in instructing a first communion class: Furniss "*Tracts of Spiritual Reading.*" Brennan "*My First Communion.*" Schmitt "*Anleitung zum ersten Communienunterricht.*"

Prayers for first communion classes, (published by Benziger Bros.)

homage to the Divine Majesty of the Lord of Heaven and earth, both the victim and the offerer being none less than he of whom it has been said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." We must not be surprised, therefore, if from the very beginning of the Church the greatest care has been taken to have the Holy Mysteries celebrated with a zeal and devotion worthy of their dignity. The early Christians considered it the highest favor and happiness to be present at this act of worship. All trials, sorrows and afflictions, their enemies heaped upon them; all the joys, pleasures and gratifications the world ever held out to them, appeared as nothing in their sight when they knelt in silent adoration before the King of kings, hidden under the species of bread and wine, and laid on the altar as the Lamb slain for the salvation of men. No persecution, no fine or punishment could ever prevent them from flocking to those hidden and secret places, where they were allowed to take part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. And as it was at that early age, so it has been ever afterwards, when the Catholic Church was persecuted, when its members were proscribed, like, for instance, in England during the Reformation; in France, during the reign of terror and revolution; in Germany, during the "Culturkampf"; or even to-day in heathen and barbarous countries. There is a wonderful power of attraction in Holy Mass, always drawing the hearts of Catholics towards the Altar and the Church. The last day will reveal to us, and in Heaven we shall see more clearly yet, how rich the blessings, how far-reaching the wholesome influence of this divine Sacrifice has been both for individuals and for the whole Christian world. We may, indeed, at times be astonished that the justice of God permits men yet to live and prosper in spite of those numberless horrible crimes going on day and night. Why, we may feel tempted to ask, does not a universal deluge destroy this impious generation or sweep whole nations from the face of the earth?



The answer lies in the words of the prophet: "In that day there shall be an Altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt." (Isaias XIX. 19.). And again: "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is a sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation." (Malach. I. 2.). The most atrocious crimes and sins committed through human malice find their expiation in that continuous act of the Son of God, by which he offers Himself ever anew to His Father on the Altars of the Catholic Church. Woe to this world if the powers of hell were successful in abolishing the Sacrifice of the Mass, or in reducing its influence to a minimum.

70. Where there is a sacrifice, there must be a priesthood. In the Old Law, God was pleased to entrust just one tribe of the Israelites, the tribe of Levi, with the right and duty to offer victims in the sanctuary and thus to keep burning the fire of devotion in the hearts of his people. Also under the New Law, not everyone is admitted to ascend the altar to make oblation to the Most High, but only those whom the Holy Ghost has chosen, who have been properly ordained, and to whom, in the rite of ordination, the words have been duly addressed: "Receive the power of offering sacrifice to God and of celebrating Masses both for the living and for the dead, in the name of the Lord." Whence do the priests of the Catholic Church derive their dignity, that sacred character so much loved and revered by pious souls, so much hated and ridiculed by the enemies of our faith and religion? The answer is, from the Eucharistic Sacrifice. In the heavenly light which goes forth from the altar, the minister of the altar is enveloped with a celestial splendor. Bishop Ullathorne in a sermon preached at the diocesan synod of Birmingham struck the right note when he said: "Consider, my brethren, what this priesthood is, what a call, what a gift, what a sublime communication of the sacerdotal character of Christ. It is the prerogative of mercy, which the Incar-



nate Son hath won over the justice of the Eternal Father, yet, without defeating justice, it is the power which God exerts over God for the pardon of the human race; it is the very function of grace and mercy and it is committed to human keeping. The acts of this power are efficacious even unto the portals of hell and even to the gates of heaven; nay, they go beyond the gates and reach that golden altar which is before the face of God, on which stands the Lamb forever slain and forever pleading mercy. The priest is the agent of the Incarnate God and the dispenser of His grace, His truth and life. "Let a man so account of us," says S. Paul, "as the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God." (Ullathorne Ecclesiast. Discourses).

71. The intimate union which the priest enters into with the Divine Saviour, when, as his representative, he stands at the altar, the sublime act performed in the Holy Sacrifice, imposes upon every priest the obligation to lead a life worthy of his calling. "The title alter Christus," says Cardinal Manning, "is both a joy and rebuke." It ought to be for us a constant impulse to a higher degree of perfection. The very thought of a priest committing a mortal sin is too revolting to dwell upon. A priest is set apart for God's glory and on his whole person, both on his soul and on his body, there are written, as it were, in golden letters, like on the diadem of the High Priest, the words "Sanctum Domino." Could it be possible that the ordained minister of Christ and His Church should ever lose sight of his end and destiny? We would certainly not believe it, if, alas, sad experience did not assure us of the contrary. Yes, there is such a fact. Priests may sully the robe of virtue and innocence, with which they should always be clothed, by mortal sin. The worst thing, however, is, that in this unfortunate state they dare ascend the altar, touch the Holy of Holies, and offer the immaculate Lamb of God with their hands polluted, and their hearts defiled by grievous sin. All the outrages our dear

Lord suffered from His enemies did not hurt his feelings so deeply as the treacherous kiss impressed upon His lips by the apostate and villainous Judas. "If my enemy had reviled me, I would have readily borne it," the Godman Jesus then could say with David, and the same he may tell a priest, who has the hardihood to offer the Holy Sacrifice with mortal guilt on his soul. This crime and sacrilegious deed having been committed once, but too often paves the way to final impenitence and utter reprobation. To such an unfortunate man nothing is holy or sacred any more. S. Alphonsus commenting on that passage of Holy Scripture, "The wicked man, when he is come into the depths of sins, contemns," says: "This wicked man is the priest who sins through malice, he contemns and despises chastisements, admonitions, the presence of Jesus Christ, who is near him on the altar; he despises all and blushes not to surpass in malice Judas, the traitor." But what shall be the unhappy end of such a priest? Behold it: "In the land of the saints he hath done wicked things, and he shall not see the glory of the Lord. The end shall be first abandonment of God and then the fire of hell." If ever you should have been so unfortunate as to fall into mortal sin, oh, hasten, as quick as you can, to confession, to wash off the stain, no matter what sacrifices you may have to make, how much money, time, and humiliation it may cost you. Better all this than to say Mass in that miserable state. Do not be satisfied with a mere contrition, for the law of the Church is too clear and evident. "*Probet autem seipsum homo. Ecclesiastica autem consuetudo declarat, eam probationem necessariam esse, ut nullus sibi conscius peccati mortalis, quantumvis sibi contritus videatur, absque praemissa sacramentali confessione ad sacram eucharistiam accedere debeat. Quod a christianis omnibus, etiam ab iis sacerdotibus, quibus ex officio incumbit celebrare haec sancta synodus perpetuo servandum esse decrevit, modo non desit illis copia confessoris.*"

Quodsi necessitate urgente sacerdos absque praevia confessione celebraverit, quam primum confiteatur." (Conc. Trid. sessio. XIII. c. VII.).

72. "Hodie celebravi, cras celebrabo." These words ought to ring in a priest's ears continually so to say and give him a warning to avoid each and everything that is not in accordance with the position he holds as the mediator between heaven and earth, between God and man. The purity of conscience with which his soul should be adorned does not consist simply in the freedom from mortal sin. He must also strive to avoid venial sin, as far as human weakness allows. Do you wish to have a proof for this? Just think of the washing of the feet performed by our Divine Redeemer previous to the institution of the Holy Eucharist and the first Mass ever celebrated. When the apostles wondered at this strange action of their Master, they were given to understand that it symbolized the utmost purity of heart required in those who desired to partake of the holy mysteries. "Let no one," S. Bernard remarks, "disregard little faults, for thus it was said to S. Peter, that, unless Christ purifies of them, we shall have no part in Christ." The total life, the whole exterior and interior of a priest ought to be such that he may inspire with a love of virtue those with whom he comes in contact. This is beautifully expressed in the Pontifical, in the exhortation which the bishop gives to the candidates before ordination. "Itaque, filii dilectissimi, servate in moribus vestris castae et sanctae vitae integritatem. Agnoscite quod agitis, imitamini quod tractatis; quatenus mortis Dominicae mysterium celebrantes, mortificare membra vestra a vitiis et concupiscentiis omnibus procuretis. Sit doctrina vestra spiritalis medicina populo Dei sit odor vitae vestrae delectamentum ecclesiae Dei, ut praedicatione atque exemplo aedificetis domum, id est familiam Dei." To comply with this warning of the Pontifical, a priest should cultivate especially those virtues which are his professional orna-

ments, viz.: charity and chastity. "The pastor's office is the highest discipline of charity," says Cardinal Manning, and again: "Between the beginning and ending of his life charity is the urgent motive which constrains, sustains and spends all his living powers. He knows himself to be "vicarius caritatis Christi." As to chastity, Cardinal Gibbons in his book, "The Ambassador of Christ," observes: "Chastity is the most glorious, the most distinctive, and the most indispensable ornament of a priest. There is no vice which people more abhor, which they are less disposed, to condone than clerical incontinence. All transgressions have a peculiar malice in a priest, but incontinence is a moral leprosy, that not only renders him loathsome in the eyes of God and man, but dulls the sense of decency and self-respect in himself. He has little regard for his reputation, for a healthy public opinion, for the scandal he brings to the Church and her members. All these considerations he sacrifices on the altar of passion." The Son of God, when living on earth, did not admit to his company but chaste and pure souls. The Virgin Mother, S. Joseph, S. John the Baptist, the Apostles, above all the beloved disciple were of unblemished purity. Can it be otherwise now? Can the same Son of God permit to rest upon his breast in the Holy Sacrament a priest who is a slave of sensuality? Certainly not. Pure must be the hands that hold the virginal flesh, pure the lips that are reddened with the Sacred Blood, pure the heart into which enters the immaculate Lamb.

73. But what about the immediate preparation for the celebration of Mass? "*Instante celebratione totis viribus (sacerdos) curare debet, ut in ara cordis ignem divini amoris succendat, actusque eliciat diversarum virtutum qui heroici sunt et tanto sacrificio quantum fieri potest convenientes.*" (Bona, de Missae celebr. c. 5.) When Jesus Christ, the High Priest of the New Law, was about to enter the Holy of Holies, viz.: to offer the bloody sacrifice, he had first a fervent intercourse with his heav-

only Father in the Garden of Olives. Thus also a priest, before he ascends the steps of the altar, should awaken in his heart such thoughts and emotions that are in accordance with the sacred act he is about to perform. This is done through meditation for "in meditatione mea exardescet ignis." S. Alphonsus bitterly complains of so many priests who neglect this powerful means of sanctification. "How can the priest," he says, "celebrate Mass with devotion without having first made mental prayer? I would be content with half an hour and with some even a quarter of an hour, but a quarter is too little. There are so many beautiful books containing meditations preparatory to Mass, but who makes use of them? It is through neglect of meditation that we see so many Masses said without devotion and with irreverence." These words of the Holy Doctor are but too true. It is a pity to behold priests never betaking themselves to mental prayer, except during a retreat, under the pretext that they have no time for this spiritual exercise or that they have no skill and no taste for it. Do not follow this example. Rise early enough every morning so that you have ample time in preparing yourself for the Holy Sacrifice by half an hour's meditation. Do not allow anyone to disturb you at that time. Leave all profane and worldly reflections, your financial cares and troubles aside. The first fruits of the day belong to God and your soul. Also that collection of oral prayers vulgo "*Praeparatio ad Missam*" contained in the Missal will come handy, as it is very apt to arouse the proper emotions in a priest's heart. If you cannot recite the whole of it, say at least a part, viz.: the orations or one or the other psalm. Last but not least, see to it that you have finished Matins and Lauds of the office of the day, for this is obligatory, though only sub veniali, hence, if possible, anticipate the evening before, as you may not have much time in the morning. Your meditation and preparation being over, walk to the Church slowly and in your clerical garb,

viz.: the cassock. Do not stand around and talk first with members of the congregation, whom you may meet on the way, but go directly to the sanctuary. The sacristy is a holy place. It is quite an abuse to talk there on profane subjects, to laugh, to joke, to read newspapers and so forth, and all this before Mass. Your devotion and attention, if you had any, will then be gone surely. Do not allow anyone to accost you in the sacristy when you are ready for celebration, if you can help it. Immediately after you have entered, vest yourself, and in putting on the vestments do not omit the different prayers, because they are of obligation. The specific formula of the Mass should be arranged beforehand, ere you go to the altar. Look up the ordo every time, otherwise you are liable to make mistakes and omit commemorations.

74. During the celebration of Mass, great care must be taken to observe the rubrics, and this in the most minute details. They all bind under sin. When set aside or performed negligently they will bring punishment on you; when done well, they are so many acts of obedience by which you will earn merit and eternal recompense. "In his (ritibus) sane vel minimum apicem adjicere, tollere aut ullo modo immutare nefas est. Nullus enim in peragendo hoc sacrificio ritus adhibetur, nulla caeremonia quae inanis aut supervacanea citra impietatem existimari possit." (cf. Conc. Baltim. II. 357). The tone of your voice, the position of your hands, the bowing of your head, your genuflections must be performed in that manner and at that time as the rubrics prescribe. Above all, however, must a priest, in celebrating Mass, be on his guard against giving scandal to the people attending. Thus, for instance, it shows little taste to become uneasy when something is not in order, to scold the servers, to give commands with a loud voice, to look around at every little noise going on in the church, to turn and move more like an actress than like a sacred minister, or to proceed in a slovenly way, to yawn or groan every minute, to pronounce



the words or to proceed too fast,\* to mutilate syllables. More or less scandal will be given by all this. A priest in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice, is taking the place of Christ Himself; everything in and about him, therefore, should breathe devotion, holiness and gracefulness, which is apt to inspire faith and respect for the Sacred Mystery in all present. "*Sacerdotium in terris peragitur sed instar coelestium munerum est computandum,*" says S. Chrysostom. Especially that part of the Mass which is called the Canon, should be performed in all its details with the greatest reverence and attention. "*Cum perveneris ad sacrum canonem,*" S. Bonaventure exhorts, "*recollige mentem ne per diversa vagetur, appone diligentiam magnam in signis et actibus, majorem in verbis, maximam in intentione.*"

75. After Mass naturally follows a suitable and proper thanksgiving. The Missal and breviary contain a series of prayers composed and adapted to this purpose. They are not of obligation but only directive with the exception, perhaps, of the canticle "*Benedicite*" and the versicles and orations attached to it, which the celebrant is requested to say whilst returning to the sacristy and in taking off the sacred vestments. Any form of prayer, whether oral or mental, is sufficient. As far as the length of time is concerned, during which this thanksgiving should be continued, no rule is prescribed. The rubrics only say "*aliquantulum,*" but we think it is by no means too strict to maintain with S. Alphonsus that at least a quarter of an hour should be given to this act. It is proper to perform it publicly in the church or sanctuary (not in the sacristy), that the people may witness it and be encouraged to do the same after Communion. In some places, especially in rural districts or country missions,

\* St. Alphonsus is of an opinion that a priest saying Mass in less than a quarter of an hour is committing a mortal sin. (cf. S. Alph. Theol. Mor. C. 6. n. 400.)



a priest may feel much embarrassed and disturbed in his devotion after Mass. Affairs of all kinds, both temporal and spiritual, may then claim his attention. If they do not take too long, it is best to expedite or settle them at once; if they require some time, tell the people to wait and first finish your thanksgiving. Never should matters of this sort be a cause of omitting that act entirely. The eucharistic Lord in the celebrant's heart has just as much and more right to be heard and attended to first than any one else.

76. How often shall a priest celebrate Mass? Priests who have charge of souls are *sub gravi* obliged to celebrate Mass on all Sundays and holy-days of obligation to give those who are entrusted to their care an opportunity of assisting at it and complying with the ecclesiastical precept. In missionary countries like ours, there being no canonical parishes, priests are not bound to offer the fruits of the Sunday Mass for their people, still it is greatly advisable to do it because it will help considerably towards furthering the great work of the pastorate, viz.: the salvation of souls. However, what about Mass on week days? Are priests free in this regard, so that they may celebrate or not just as they please? Whatever theoretically may be said on this point, practically there is no question or dispute. A Catholic priest, whether he has charge of souls or not, ought to offer the Holy Sacrifice every day, unless he be excused for a truly reasonable cause, such as sickness, want of liturgical requisites, etc. The author of the Imitation of Christ says: "When a priest celebrates, he honors God, he rejoices the angels, he edifies the Church, he helps the living, he obtains rest for the dead, and makes himself partaker of all that is good." Again St. Thomas (3. p. qu. 82, a. 10) remarks: "Quidam dixerunt quod sacerdos potest omnino a consecratione licite abstinere, nisi teneatur ex cura sibi commissa celebrare. Sed hoc irrationabiliter dicitur, quia musquisque tenetur uti gratia sibi data quum fuerit oppor-

tunum, secundum illud (II. Cor. 6. 1.): "Exhortamur ne in vacuum gratiam Dei recipiatis." Opportunitas autem sacrificii offerendi non solum attenditur per comparisonem ad fideles Christi quibus oportet sacramenta administrari, sed principaliter per comparisonem ad Deum, cui consecratione hujus sacramenti sacrificium offertur." A work which is of infinitely more value to God and man than all the works which the angels in heaven and creatures on earth taken together could perform, certainly should not be omitted without serious reasons. Such a work is the Eucharistic Sacrifice. "Tantum valet celebratio Missae, quantum valet mors Christi in cruce," is a sentence attributed to St. Chrysostom. The faithful have a keen mind and perception; they are scandalized when they see a priest making little of the daily celebration and looking for ease and comfort. And what shall we say of the priest himself? Has he never heard of the "fructus specialissimus" awarded exclusively to the celebrant? In the Holy Sacrifice we possess an inexhaustible fund of grace for our own sanctification. The solitary position of the secular priest in the missions of the United States is fraught with many dangers. Worldly business, external affairs are liable to make you lose that first love of which the angel speaks in the Apocalypse to the bishop of Laodicea. Very well, the daily celebration of Mass is the means to keep the fire of love burning in your soul.

78. A particular obligation to offer the Holy Sacrifice arises from stipends given by private parties. From the very moment that you accept a stipend you are bound *sub gravi* to say the Mass according to the intention of the giver, and this within a reasonable time. The common doctrine is that these Masses must be celebrated within two months, and if it be a Mass for dead persons recently departed, within one month. Hence do not accept more stipends than you are able to dispose of within the period permitted by the canons, or tell the parties that you cannot comply with their wish until after several

months; then, if they are satisfied, there is no objection. Still better, however, it would be to relieve yourself of such an abundance of stipends by sending them to other priests of your acquaintance, who are able to say the Masses without much delay. According to a recent decree of the Congregation of Rites (25th May, 1893,) a priest having superfluous stipends at the end of the year is ordered *sub gravi* to send them to his ordinary, that he may distribute them among indigent clergymen of the diocese. The same decree contains yet several other rules to prevent all abuse or "turpe lucrum" with Mass stipends. It takes too long to give a detailed explanation of these rules right here; we must refer our readers to books of moral, liturgy, or canon law. If a stipend has been accepted for an urgent cause (*pro felici partu, pro infirmo, etc.*) you must say the Mass at once, so that the effect may be realized yet. Likewise if certain conditions are added; for instance: that the Mass shall be celebrated at a particular shrine, at a privileged altar, etc., you sin against justice by not complying with these conditions. The rate of stipends for different Masses (*viz.*: low Mass, Missa cantata, solemn Mass) is fixed by diocesan statutes or by legal custom. A priest is not allowed to ask more than the rate permits, but he may accept any amount if such is the voluntary and spontaneous gift of the parties. It is not wise either to go below the established rate, as this is liable to injure other priests. That you may keep an accurate account, have a special book for that purpose. Mark the date on which the stipend has been received, the amount of money paid, the intention of the giver, and the date on which the Mass has been said. Thus there will be no danger of defrauding the people, of forgetting Masses, of undue postponing of them, of Masses not said if you should die suddenly. At the same time such a book will be a good record. You will be able to see how many intentions, as an average, you receive annually, this being a sort of spiritual barometer for the congre-

gation. To encourage people in this regard, it is well to publish every Sunday the various intentions for each day of the week. Sometimes parties wish to found a Mass, viz.: they intend to deposit a certain sum of money as capital or principal, with this stipulation, that the annual interest of it should be used as a stipend for a Mass according to their intention, to be said either *in perpetuum* or for a number of years. It may be doubted whether, under the present circumstances here in the United States, ecclesiastical affairs yet lacking stability, such foundations could be safely accepted. Certainly no priest can accept them on his own authority. He must have the consent of the ordinary and sufficient security must be given to guarantee the celebration of the Masses. (cf. Con. Baltim. II. n. 370).

78. Only the duly ordained minister of Christ, the priest of the Catholic Church, is entitled to ascend the altar to offer the Holy Sacrifice. But it would be wrong to conclude that lay people cannot participate in this act. On the contrary, they are urged to assist and unite their pious prayers and intentions with those of the sacrificing priest. Thus they shall have a particular share in the fruits of the Sacred Mystery. "*Necessario fatemur*," says the Council of Trent, "*nullum aliud opus adeo sanctum ac divinum a Christi fidelibus tractari posse, quam hoc ipsum tremendum mysterium.*" Because to assist at the Holy Sacrifice is such a holy and meritorious work, the Church commands the faithful, who have come to the use of reason, to hear Mass on all Sundays and holydays of obligation. The commandment binds under mortal sin; only a grave cause will exonerate a person from this duty. We are sorry to say that the importance of the obligation is not always well understood by Catholics in the United States. They hold themselves excused sometimes under vain pretexts and through mere illusions. We are satisfied to grant that in country missions and rural districts, where people live at a considerable distance from the church, the roads at the same time being in a poor condition and the

weather severe, it is often impossible or very difficult to come to Mass. But not so in cities and towns. Still quite a number, especially of young folks, stay away from Mass on Sunday simply through neglect. Let a pastor spare no efforts and pains to stop such abuses. Moreover, the faithful must be admonished to assist at Mass also on week days.\* Not all are able to do this. However, a good many could and would if they were properly instructed. "*Vehementer cupimus, ut animarum moderatores commissos sibi greges moneant et cohortentur, ut singulis quoque si fieri possit per hebdomadem diebus et praecipue in festis Domini nostri et beatissimae Virginis ubi nulla adest legis obligatio Missae sacrificio devote interesse velint.*" (cf. Conc. Baltim. II. n. 365). There are divers ways and means to introduce this pious custom of assisting at daily Mass. First of all, let a pastor stay at home as much as possible, celebrate at a fixed hour, and at an hour which is convenient for the people. To neglect this is equivalent to depriving his flock of a great benefit which will not go unpunished before God. Again, if there be a church bell, let the sign be given a sufficient time (twenty minutes at least) ahead of the service. Above all, however, see to it that the children of the parochial school attend Mass every day. If you wish to ground these children well in solid piety, and to cultivate the habit in them of attending Mass well afterwards, when they shall have grown up, you must in this, as in every other good work, accustom them whilst they are young. "*Adolescens juxta viam suam, etiam quum senuerit, non recedat ab ea.*" (Prov. XXII. 6.) The children (when in church), of course, must be watched and looked after by their teachers, because left to themselves they are liable to commit some mischief. To fix their attention, it is necessary to engage them in singing or praying. Finally the rector of a parish should not fail to explain to his flock in sermon and catechism the great value of this Sacrifice, the mode of assisting, its wonderful effects, etc., thus to interest them and to

enkindle faith and zeal. This ought to be done not only once, but repeatedly, for "Fides ex auditu." A parish in which you may happen to see quite a number of adult persons, men and women at Mass on a week-day's morning, is a credit to the shepherd who rules over it. It shows that the people are not too much absorbed by worldly affairs, but also keep in view their eternal salvation. The zeal and patience of a pastor therefore, should not stop short until he has obtained what he wants and what, under existing circumstances, he may reasonably expect. Two more remarks we must add right here. First, whenever a holyday of obligation happens to fall on a week day, in cities at least, where several Masses are said, one Mass ought to be early in the morning (five or six o'clock), to give parties that have to work a chance to assist. Again, when there is a concourse of people for confession, particularly on Sundays, as soon as the hour for Mass has arrived, stop hearing confessions at once, no matter how many are waiting. It is better they wait and go to confession after Mass, than that the whole congregation should wait for them and become impatient, some perhaps even returning home and not hearing Mass at all.

79. Where shall Mass be celebrated? According to a universal ecclesiastical law, the Eucharistic Sacrifice cannot be licitely offered except in churches and public oratories which have been erected and set apart for divine service, and for this end have been consecrated or at least been blessed. (cf. Conc. Trid. Sess. XXII.). Bishops may permit the celebration of Mass also in private chapels and oratories inside of convents, hospitals, seminaries and all places which come under the name of "loca pia." Religious, with solemn vows, are eo ipso entitled to celebrate Mass in their own oratories, likewise bishops in their domestic chapels and when traveling they have the right of a portable altar with the privilege of saying Mass anywhere. For all other places a special apostolic indult is



required. In missionary countries like America, such a papal privilege is usually forwarded to the ordinaries of the diocese, who may communicate it to priests under their jurisdiction. But this faculty "*celebrandi sub dio et sub terra in loco tamen decenti*" has been limited by the Second Council of Baltimore (n. 362), so that at present priests cannot licitly say Mass in private dwellings except at regular stations, where no church exists, and in houses designated by the bishop; also once in a while in other places, but then only by a special permission of the Ordinary. Besides, note the term "*in loco tamen decenti*." Thus it is not allowed to celebrate in the temples and meeting houses of heretics or schismatics, nor in the dwellings of Jews, infidels, Protestants, etc., nor in the halls of Free Masons, Odd Fellows, and other secret lodges, nor in taverns, saloons, dancing and gambling houses, nor finally in any apartments used as bedrooms, whether a person is actually sleeping there or not. (cf. Putzer "*Commentarium in Facultates*" n. 161. III. C. and Kenrick *Theol. Mor. Tr.* XVII. n. 87). Whenever you should be forced to celebrate in a private place, make an investigation beforehand and see whether it really is "*locus decens*" in the sense that the faculty demands. Usually you must then carry along everything needed, viz.: altar-stone, vestments, missal, chalice, etc. Therefore have a written list of the various utensils made out and compare it with the different articles packed up in your valise or traveling bag before you leave home, lest you forget something, so that you could not say Mass, thus putting yourself and the people to great inconvenience. During the cold season the churches, as a rule in the United States, are heated, but if this should be too expensive on week days and the temperature too low, the bishop may permit to celebrate Mass in the sacristy or in the school-room. The best thing, however, is to have a special apartment, a so-called winter chapel, set aside for this purpose in the basement of the church or elsewhere.



80. The "rector ecclesiae" must see to it that the various requisites for the celebration of the divine mysteries be in a proper condition, suitable to the dignity of their purpose and in accordance with the rubrics. The altar is to be built either of stone, not brick, so as to constitute one solid structure (*altare fixum et immobile*) or of wood, in which latter case a stone large enough to hold a chalice and host (*altare portatile*) must be inserted into the "mensa altaris." Both kinds need to be consecrated before they are used. The "*altare fixum*" loses its consecration whenever it is removed from its original place, or when the mensa is loosened from the lower structure. The "*altare portatile*" ceases to be consecrated when the little "sepulchrum" containing the relics is opened. This "sepulchrum" must be in the middle of the "*lapis altaris*"; not on the edge. It must be closed by a small stone, well cemented; not by plaster of Paris only. The total structure of the altar ought to have a somewhat elevated position on a platform with at least one step. Three different pieces of linen cloth, which have been blessed beforehand, must be spread over the mensa, the upper one so that it hangs down to the floor on both sides. Candles and candlesticks, at least during Mass, ought not to be put on the mensa, but on the shelves at both sides of the tabernacle. The platform and steps leading to the altar should be covered with a rug or carpet. "*Gradus omnes altaris inferiores cooperiantur aliquo amplo et pulchro tapete.*" (cf. *Caerem. Episc. L. I. c. 12. n. 16*). It is proper to have the altar and its surroundings ornamented just as becomes the day and season. "*Igitur habenda est ratio in iis (ecclesiis) ordinandis temporis et loci ac personarum. Decet enim ut in diebus festis splendidior appareat, quam in aliis non festivis eoque magis, quo ipsi dies festivi erunt solemniores.*" (*Caerem. Ep. L. I. c. 12. n. 1*). The fittest and best ornaments are flowers. Natural plants should be preferred to artificial flowers. Of the former alone holds good what the canticle says: "*Benedicite*

universa germinantia in terra Domino." Artificial flowers, because they easily come in contact with lights, are dangerous and on the whole are but a poor substitute for the products of nature. With a little care you will be able to have natural flowers almost throughout the whole year. During the season of Advent and Lent, whenever the Mass is of the day, the altar must be bare, without flowers and other ornaments; likewise at Requiem Masses, in which only crape or black drapery may be used. For the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice you need proper vestments. Let them be neat and clean. "*In divino sacrificio celebrando, detur opera diligenter ut altarium ornamenta et vasa sacra sint munda, non foeda corporalia vel purificatoria, non vestes lacerae vel indecentes, indusia vero privati apparatus sub amictu et alba lateant, ita ut non indecoro vel mundano more appareant.*" (Conc. Baltim. II. n. 360). See to it that these vestments are of the material prescribed. The amice and alb must be of linen, the chasuble, stole, etc., of nothing inferior to silk. (cf. Wapelhorst Comp. Sac. Liturg. 11. 6). For Sundays and holydays you should have a few more costly vestments. Take care, however, that they are strictly liturgical as to shape and color. Every mission, even the poorest, we believe should have at least one set (five colors) of sacerdotal vestments. Vestments must be blessed before they are used. The chalice must be consecrated; it may be made either of gold or silver or tin (stannum), perhaps even of brass or copper. In the last case, however, it ought to be gilt or silver-plated. The inside of the cup must always be gilt. The gilt wears out in course of time, therefore have it renewed occasionally. Keep the chalice and all the other sacred vessels clean and bright. The cruets containing the wine and water, as a rule, should be made of glass; metal cruets are not forbidden, but less practical. The candles for Mass and for all other liturgical functions, must be of wax. It is a mortal sin to celebrate Mass with other than wax candles. Bee's wax has a symbolical

meaning, it alone is a type of virginity, of the pure body of Christ, the fruit of the pure and immaculate Virgin Mary. Wax candles are very cheap now, and it is bad economy to buy under the plea of poverty a large amount of stearine and other candles, which cost twice as much or more, instead of the required number of wax candles.

81. Nothing deserves greater attention and more careful vigilance than the "*materia sacrificii*." The sole matter allowed and prescribed "*jure divino*" for the Sacrifice of the Mass is bread and wine. The bread must have been prepared of wheat flour, it must be of round shape (*forma orbiculari*), it must be unleavened at least according to the Latin Rite. The best way to get the flour is to buy it at the mill and not in a store, for thus you may rest more assured, to obtain it genuine and unadulterated. Do not buy too much at once, and have it stored up well in a dry and separate place. In baking the bread, nothing but water ought to be mixed with the flour; no milk, butter, grease, etc. It may be well to instruct those who have charge of this work, beforehand. The hosts must be cut well and fragments adhering be removed as far as possible. It will serve much to the purpose to let the plates of bread, after it has been baked, first stay for a few days in a place neither too dry nor too damp. Hosts which are older than two or three weeks, are unfit for Mass, and at least "*materia illicita*," if not "*invalida*." The second matter to be used for the Holy Sacrifice is wine. This wine must be perfectly natural *i. e.*, "*vinum de vite*." To deserve this name it must have been made from ripe grapes, it must have gone through a natural process of fermentation, and it must not contain any artificial and foreign ingredients. Only for sweet wines a little allowance has been made lately. The bishop of Marseilles (France) had asked whether it was proper to add to certain sorts of wine a small quantity of spirits of alcohol, since otherwise it would be too difficult to preserve the wine. To this the Roman authorities answered:

“Dummodo spiritus extractus fuerit a genimine vitis, et quantitas alcoholica addita una cum ea, quam vinum de quo agitur, naturaliter continet, non excedat proportionem duodecim pro centum et admixtio fiat, quando vinum est valde recens, nihil obstare quominus idem vinum in Missae sacrificium adhibeatur.” Everybody knows that in the manufacture of wine an awful sight of adulteration takes place nowadays. Perhaps fifty per cent. of what is sold under the name of wine is either no wine at all; only an extract of black berries, lemons and other fruit, or it contains not enough “succus vitis” to render it fit for sacramental purpose. It is not easy always to discover whether wine has been adulterated. Indications of adulteration are an unnatural sweetness and burning taste, and with red wine a strongly colored froth on top. The only sure way, however, to detect falsification is a chemical analysis, and even this may fail when the fault lies not in the ingredients, but in the process of extracting the juice. To obviate the danger of ever using a product for Mass which is “materia illicita” or even “invalida,” it is best to make the wine yourself, viz.: buy or raise the grapes and have the manufacturing done by an expert, according to your instructions. Of course not everyone may feel inclined to do this, and for small parishes, where only a limited quantity of Mass wine is used annually, it may not pay. Hence ordinarily rectors of churches will procure their Mass wine from dealers or merchants. There is no objection to this, provided the necessary precautions be taken to obtain a genuine “vinum de vite.” Here we take the liberty to make the following suggestions:

1. Never get your wine from a merchant who is not a practical Catholic, nor from a Jew, a Protestant, or apostate Catholic. Do not trust their promises or the references of priests and bishops forwarded by them.

2. Do not take for Mass wine such as is not sold for that purpose, but only for table use, and hence do not buy the wine from a common liquor dealer or saloon keeper.

3. Do not send your orders to some obscure firm in a distant place, especially in the East, in California, etc.

4. Do not take for Mass any foreign wines, nor, if you can get other sorts, red or sweet wines; the latter are liable to be adulterated in a manner which is hard to discover. (cf. Conc. Baltim. n. 373.)

5. Do not use wine which is either very cheap or very expensive. If too cheap, it is probably too fresh, or not enough substantial; if too expensive, it may not be genuine.

6. The safest procedure is to buy the wine for Mass either from a monastery or ecclesiastical institution which is engaged in manufacturing it, or from a reliable Catholic firm, which is either manufacturing the wine itself or gets it from another Catholic firm as the original producer. To make sure of this, you must inquire beforehand by asking disinterested parties.

However not only in procuring Mass wine you ought to see to it that you get a genuine article, but no less care you ought to take in preserving it well. Here, again, we may be allowed to add a few practical hints:

1. Have the wine sent in a solid hermetically closed keg or barrel and examine it well after it has arrived.

2. Do not tap it at once, but let it rest quietly a week or two to settle.

3. Do not tap it when the weather is damp or rainy and there is too much moisture in the air, because it will affect the wine immediately so that you could hardly get it clear and clean, as desired.

4. Have the bottles well cleaned beforehand; do not use old corks, but always new ones.

5. The bottles, after they have been filled, must be laid horizontally on a soft ground (in sand or sawdust) and be kept in a dry cellar.

6. Have the bottle which you actually use always corked and keep it under lock in the sacristy.

7. Clean the small glasses or cruets sufficiently before use and again after they have been used.

By observing such little rules all danger of celebrating Mass with a "materia invalida" or "illicita," as far as the wine is concerned, will be avoided and the propriety due to the Holy Sacrifice be observed.

82. A priest in saying Mass has need of a server, partly that he may answer to the various prayers, representing thus, as it were, the whole congregation of the faithful, partly that he may assist in what cannot be performed conveniently by the celebrant himself, viz.: the carrying of the missal, taking the wine and water, etc. It is a mortal sin for a priest to say Mass without a server, if he easily could have one. The faculty usually granted to the clergy of this country, "*celebrandi sine ministro*," is to be interpreted that you are permitted to say Mass without an attendant if you cannot get any, and if otherwise, you would have to omit the celebration entirely. Only male persons, clerics or laymen, are allowed to serve at the altar. Women, in accordance with the rule of St. Paul (I. Cor. XIV. 34), are altogether excluded, but a religious may answer; however, she is not allowed to lend any assistance, and she must remain outside the sanctuary. Even in convents, sisters must procure a male server if possible. Usually boys or young men are chosen for the office. They ought to be selected with prudence and care, because not everyone is fit to fill the position. Take only such as have a good reputation, and who besides show practical talent. There is a saying that boys who serve at Mass are frequently the rudest boys in the parish. This is not altogether untrue, and the blame in most cases lies with the pastor because he does not reprove the servers when they do not behave well. Never, as a rule, leave the boys alone in the sacristy. If you cannot watch them yourself, have an elderly person, teacher, sexton, trustee, etc., around. Do not allow them to talk, to fight, to play or do any other mischief in the sacristy. They must be made to understand that the sacristy is a holy place, and that the office held by them is an office of sacredness which they



must perform in a proper way, or else they will be discharged. Also here we may say "*quotidiana vilescent.*" It is not advisable to keep the same servers too long, because gradually they may lose all respect for the sanctuary. Therefore they should be changed, say, once a week or at least once a month. Of course, in small towns or rural districts, where perchance you have only a few servers or a limited number, you cannot help keeping them for a longer season. But, then, always watch them and do not tolerate things which are unbecoming. Priests sometimes take boys to board and let them stay at their house, engaging them for divers little services. We cannot advocate this measure. Such boys are liable to be spoiled, because they acquire a habit of idleness, and they see and hear too much for which their minds are not yet prepared. As to actual service at Mass, we may suggest the following. First of all, the young scholars must be well drilled, so as to do everything just as the rubrics prescribe, properly and gracefully. They ought to know the responses well by heart and pronounce every word slowly and distinctly. They must wear a clerical dress, a sort of cassock of red or black color covering the whole body and not only the lower part in the way of a skirt; over the cassock a short surplice. It may also be proper to have special shoes or slippers for them. See to it that they handle their wearing apparel carefully, that they hang it up in a separate place and not throw it around. The same holds good as to vessels, cruets censers, furniture, etc., passing through their hands. They must be accustomed to punctuality and decorum. Tell them to come to church in a decent dress, not with coats or pants torn; their face washed and their hair well combed. Little as such items may seem, yet they are, after all, of importance for "*sancta sunt sancte tractanda.*" Finally do not overburden these boys. As a rule, they should not serve two or three Masses in succession, because it may fill them with disgust for their office and for religion altogether. "*Qui altari servit,*



de altari etiam vivere debet" may be applied here, too, though only on a small scale. Remunerate your servers occasionally, let them have a little feast or frolic, make an excursion with them, etc. This will help to foster an honorable pride and ambition among them and render them alert in attending to their duties.

## APPENDIX I.

### VESPERS.

83. The Catholic Church is not content with honoring the Lord of Heaven and earth in the morning by the oblation of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, but she also has a solemn evening service called Vespers. The people of the Old Law were ordered by God Himself to offer two gifts a day, one in the morning, one in the evening. In the book of Exodus (XXIX. 37, 41) we read: "*Hoc est quod facies in altari, agnos anniculos duos per singulos dies jugiter, unum agnum mane . . . alterum vero agnum offeres ad vesperam juxta ritum matutinae oblationis et juxta ea quae diximus in odorem suavitatis.*" The object of this arrangement was to indicate that the first and last fruits of the day belong to the Most High exclusively. The ceremonies and rites of the ancient law were a shadow of the things to come. The new religion founded by Christ destined to supersede and bring to perfection the original covenant made through Moses, could not be left, therefore, without an evening service. Vespers, in some form or another, existed from early times. The Apostolic Constitutions give a warning to the faithful to come to divine worship twice a day. "*Ab ecclesia Dei ne absis, surgens ad eam mane, antequam ullum opus aggrèdiaris et rursus ad eam vespere ut gratias agas Deo de iis propter quae vitam tibi largitus est.*" (Const. Apost. lib. II. c. 36.)

A similar passage we find in one of the sermons of St. Augustine: "Veniet ergo cuicumque possibile sit ad vespertinam celebrationem et oret ibi in conventu ecclesiae pro peccatis suis Deum, qui vero non possit saltem in domo sua oret." (De temp. sermo. 251). For a number of centuries the daily evening service was considered as an important religious function and a common worship in which the whole congregation, both lay and clerical, were anxious to take part. Later on though, the people at large ceased to attend, and only the clergy, as far as they had a "vita communis," continued to celebrate Vespers, as is done yet with cathedral chapters and in religious houses. However, on Sundays the old custom of having an evening service for the whole congregation, remained in vogue and has not been abandoned. Diocesan synods and provincial councils held in different parts of the world up to a recent period have deemed it proper to urge the faithful to sanctify the Sunday not only by hearing Mass in the morning, but also by meeting for a public worship in the afternoon or evening. Thus with us, the Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore say: "Vesperae integrae ut decantentur diebus Dominicis Festisque in omnibus ecclesiis more ecclesiae Romanae, quatenus fieri potest volumus et mandamus." (n. 379).

84. Are rectors of congregations obliged to have Vespers in their churches? The objection is heard sometimes that in the United States their being no regular parishes, this obligation does not exist. However the words of the Baltimore Council just quoted leave no doubt in this matter. And indeed, we may ask, is not a priest having care of souls bound to offer those under his charge the ordinary means of sanctification? Certainly, you will say. Now facts without number prove that in congregations of cities, towns and villages at least, where Vespers are not held, there is always much disorder, many profaning the day of the Lord by drinking, dancing and other sinful dissipations. Only a grave cause can excuse a

pastor from not celebrating Vespers. Thus in a country mission, which is made up exclusively of farmers living miles away from the church, it may be impossible to have a service in the afternoon. The people having been at Mass in the morning and at a late Mass besides, cannot be expected to come to church a second time in the afternoon. Again, in a small parish there is perhaps no choir and no way of organizing one. All this naturally will furnish a sufficient excuse. Still we cannot help indorsing what an zealous American bishop\* in the instructions for his clergy once remarked: "We have known clergymen to omit Vespers from one end of the year to the other, on the plea that they had no choir and could not get up one. This may be possible, but it appears very strange that both predecessors and successors of such clergymen were able to get up a choir and to have Vespers regularly. Where there is a will there also will be found the means." Some priests object to Vespers, and do not hold any because, as they say, the people do not appreciate them, they being sung in Latin. They prefer to hold services in the vernacular and devotions, in which the whole congregation could take a more lively and active part. We believe that without a special permission of the ordinary the latter cannot be done. "*Atque hae (Vesperae) quidem nunquam omitendae sunt,*" says the Council of Baltimore in the above cited passage, "*ob alia exercitia pietatis. Cultus enim sollemnis ecclesiae Pontificibus probatus, et per tot saecula vigen Deo gratior censendus est.*" A pastor is not authorized to substitute any service of his own for what has been established by the Church. Certain usages and customs in European countries cannot be transplanted to another soil without the proper sanction.

85. Are the people obliged to attend Vespers? They are not obliged strictly and sub gravi. But we do not agree with those who say that there is no obligation what-

\* Bishop Baltes, Pastoral instruction, II Part, n. 80.

soever. There is a divine law of sanctifying the Lord's Day which means the whole day. Therefore people who habitually stay away from Vespers for apparently no reason, simply under the pretext that there is no ecclesiastical precept, understand little what the divine law demands of them. They by such conduct sin at least venially, they give scandal, and can hardly lay any claim to the name of good Catholics. A congregation in which such a state of things prevails, where at Vespers you meet only the school children and a few pious women, deserves the blame of the Holy Ghost: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth." (Apoc. III. 16). If perchance you are sent to a place of this kind, use all means possible to effect a change. "Argue, obsecra, in omni patientia et doctrina." (2 Tim. 4. 2.) "In patientia," viz.: do not scold the people at once, but bear with them first; a reform needs time. Inquire into the causes why Vespers are neglected, and try to remove them. One reason perhaps is because the service is at a wrong hour too early in the afternoon. It may be more expedient in cities to have it in the evening at seven or eight o'clock. Again, "argue in doctrina." Many persons do not know what this service means. Instruct your parishioners about the object the Church has in view, show them the beauty, the deep mystery contained in the psalms, anthems and other parts of the office, procure for them books having a translation in the vernacular. Let the people who cannot attend Vespers understand that it is highly desirable to have private devotions at their homes with their families on Sunday afternoons.

86. In what manner must Vespers be carried on? As a matter of course everything should be strictly rubrical, as far as circumstances allow. If you possibly can, if your choir is able, have the full office (psalms, antiphons, etc.,) chanted. If this cannot be done, let at least the psalms, the hymn and Magnificat be sung. The singing ought to be alternately. In case the choir be too weak for this per-

formance, the celebrant may sing one verse, the members of the choir another. The practice followed in many places is to have a number of boys (pupils of the parochial school), with good voices and well drilled, stationed in the sanctuary, who are singing alternately with the choir on the organ loft. This mode is highly recommended by the Second Council of Baltimore. "*Insuper valde exoptandum esse censemus, ut rudimenta cantus Gregoriani in scholis parochialibus exponantur et exerceantur, sicque numero eorum, qui psalmos bene cantare valent magis magisque increscente, paulatim major saltem pars populi secundum primitivae ecclesiae adhuc in variis locis vigentem usum Vesperas et alia similia cum ministris et choro decantare addiscat. Qua ratione omnium aedificatio promovebitur, justa illud S. Pauli: Loquentes vobismetipsis in psalmis et hymnis et canticis spiritualibus.*" (n. 380). The formula of the Vespers may be either the office of the day, according to the ordo and diocesan calendar, or always one and the same; for instance, of the Blessed Virgin, of the Patron Saint of the church, of the Sunday, etc. The latter is permitted now in parochial churches for the Sunday service of the people, provided the formula chosen be a liturgical formula found in the "*Vesperale Romanum.*" The celebrant must observe the rubrics well: sit, stand, kneel, etc., as is prescribed. He should wear the cope from the very beginning and not put it on only at the Magnificat. The acolythes, censer bearer, etc., ought to be taught well as to what they have to do. When everything is executed gracefully and with promptitude in the sanctuary, the people in the body of the church will be edified and find it a pleasure to attend.

## APPENDIX II.

## CHURCH MUSIC.

87. True religion is not confined to the silent prayer of the heart; it longs for an external expression of those affections with which the innermost soul is filled. Nay more, when these affections are strong it is but natural that by the very tone and modulation of our voice we indicate the sentiments fluctuating in our bosom. This is the origin of vocal music at divine worship. As a further vehicle, instrumental music is added to help the human voice in performing its task with greater perfection, with more skill and alacrity. This but reasonable practice has the positive approbation of the Holy Ghost Himself. By the mouth of the royal psalmist He calls upon us: "Sing, ye, to the Lord a new canticle, praise ye the Lord in His Holy places, praise Him with the sound of trumpet, praise Him with timbrel and choir, praise Him with strings and organ." (Psalm 150). The Catholic Church has followed this advice of the Divine Spirit in all ages. When the early Christians met in the catacombs of Rome for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, the air of the underground hallowed spots resounded with the praises uttered by the mouths of the pious worshippers. At a later period during the Middle Ages and up to our own times, that original mode of honoring God, handed over from ancient date, has been kept up constantly. This may be seen from the fact that the most learned theologians and most saintly men throughout various centuries have vied with each other in composing sacred hymns and melodies to be sung by the faithful at divine service. It may suffice to mention St. Ambrose (*Te Deum laudamus*), St. Augustine (*"Exsultet jam angelica turba"*), St. Gregory the Great (*"Audi benigne Conditor"*), St. Bernard (*"Jesu dulcis memoria"*), St. Thomas Aquinas (*"Lauda Sion"*). Quite

a number of other hymns, sequences, etc., ("Ave Maris Stella," "Dies Irae," etc.) whose authors are unknown, have found their way into ecclesiastical liturgy one after the other. All this proves how anxious the Church of Christ has been to foster singing as an important part of her service. Also instrumental music has met with ecclesiastical sanction. Though not as old as vocal music, yet it may be traced back to the seventh or eighth century. The most appropriate musical instrument for divine worship is the organ. Other instruments, viz.: violins, clarionettes, etc., cannot be used except with permission of the Ordinary.\* Large churches especially in cities should have a pipe organ; in a small church a reed organ, vulgo melodeon may answer the purpose.

88. Singing in church may be either choral or congregational. The first kind is done by a select band of special voices (choir), in the latter, the whole mass of the people joins. During the liturgical functions (viz.: at Mass, Vespers, Benediction, etc.,) only that which is contained in the liturgical books (Missal, Breviary, etc.,) may be sung, and this in the liturgical language, viz.: Latin. It is an abuse to sing in the vernacular during High Mass (*Missa solemnis* and *Missa cantata*). During a low Mass which, as such, requires no singing, the people attending in a body, or the choir, as the case may be, are allowed to sing in the vernacular, provided the songs have the approbation of the Ordinary, or are taken from approved books. The pastor ought to do his best to get up a good choir in his church. We are fully aware of the difficulties which, in this regard, priests frequently meet with, the disappointments and inconveniences they are exposed to. However, we do not believe that this should be a sufficient cause for dropping the matter or not caring about it. A few suggestions may find their place here. First of all,

\* *Nec alia instrumenta musicalia addantur, nisi de consensu Episcopi.*" (Caerem. Ep. L. 1. c. 29. n. 11.)



it must be borne in mind that the singing during divine service is not simply a mechanical performance or an exercise of art, but a truly religious act in the same way as praying. Therefore only faithful, pious and practical Catholics ought to be chosen for the choir. Do not admit Jews, infidels, or Protestants, no matter what excellent voices they may have. Though, strictly speaking, women should be silent in church, as St. Paul says, yet it seems to be a tolerated practice now everywhere in the United States to have female persons engaged as singers in church choirs, as otherwise in most places it would be impossible to get up a choir. However, you must see to it that only ladies or girls of good reputation are selected; no light-minded, careless, flirting damsels. Let the members of the choir understand that their office is a sacred one, and that they must give a good example to the whole congregation. There must be no misdemeanor about them in church, such as laughing, talking, and other kinds of disorder on the gallery. They should be ready to make sacrifices for the good cause in attending the rehearsals regularly, in bearing with criticism, in avoiding jealousy among themselves. A few timely remarks made by the pastor will not fail to keep up the right spirit. The pastor should encourage them by being present at the rehearsals as much as possible, by praising and rewarding them occasionally. As a rule, the service ought to be voluntary; no one should be coaxed to join or remain, if he is not perfectly willing to do so.

89. We cannot help expressing a remark about the crying abuses and profanations as to music and singing which, in but too many churches, exist. All laws and decrees issued by the Holy See, by the Congregation of Rites, by provincial councils, by synods and bishops have not done away with them. Quite a number of priests, it seems, do not realize what duties they have on this point. "*Cavendum autem est, ne sonus organi sit lascivus aut impurus et ne cum eo proferantur cantus, qui ad officium*

quod agitur non spectent, nedum profani aut ludicri; idem quoque cantores et musici observent, ne vocum harmonia quae ad pietatem augendam ordinata est, aliquid levitatis aut lasciviae praeseferat ac potius audientium animos a rei divinae contemplatione avocet, sed sit devota, distincta, et intelligibilis." (Caerem. Episc. L. I. c. XXVIII. 11. 12). The Third Council of Baltimore has devoted a whole chapter (Tit. III. c. IV.) to sacred music, which is worth while reading. "Iisdem pastoribus," the Fathers of the Council say, "dum revocamus in mentem munus ipsis impositum dirigendi selectionem musicae in suis ecclesiis, districte mandamus, ut nunquam tolerant templum Dei profanis melodibus resonare." How is this law observed? The taste of many clergymen, we are sorry to state, is very strange, and their conscience, it seems, very lax. Lest somebody accuse us of undue zealotism, we will adduce the words which an American prelate once, in an official document and constitution\* for his diocese, uttered: "Many of our churches have ceased to be houses of prayer; they have been changed into exhibition halls, where gentlemen and ladies exhibit the power and sweetness of their voices; into opera houses, where the solo of a certain young lady or the duet and quartet of favorite vocalists are admired. 'Hic non rebus quae cantentur, sed cantu moventur.' People will go to certain churches, not because preaching is more instructive there, or the divine service more according to the rubrics, but because, as they say, there is better singing, which singing is considered better in proportion as it is unecclesiastical, theatrical and profane."

90. But what is really understood by music fit for divine service? It would transgress the limits of our work to give a detailed explanation of the whole matter. Only a few brief observations may be inserted here: The

\* Pastoral Instruction for the diocese of Alton, by Right Rev. P. Baltes, (II part, 86.)

Gregorian or Plain Chant is by eminence "the" music of the Church. All liturgical books, the Missal, Gradual, Vespéral, Ritual, and the Directorium Chori, contain no other kind of music than Plain Chant. As a matter of course, therefore, this music should be practiced and cultivated more than any other. It is the duty of the rectors of congregations to insist on having this music learned and followed in their schools and choirs. Thus the entire congregation will be enabled by and by to sing the ordinary parts of divine service, i. e., the Responses, Psalms, the Ordinary of the Mass: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, and certain hymns as the *Tantum Ergo*, *Veni Creator*, etc. Those parts of the liturgy, however, that change according to the different seasons and feasts of the ecclesiastical year, should be performed by a select choir. Besides the Gregorian Chant, the Church approves of figured music, as far as it is in keeping with the sacredness of the liturgical functions, or, we might say as well, as far as it is in keeping with the peculiar spirit of Plain Chant. Plain Chant is the best and safest criterion by which we could judge whether a musical composition is fit for the church or not. The history of church music and our own experience shows that wherever the Gregorian Chant is badly performed, neglected or entirely abandoned, church music will, and of need must, degenerate. On the other hand, wherever the Gregorian Chant is carefully practised and executed, there is no desire for worldly strains, no matter what their artistic value is otherwise. If, therefore, you want to be safe in selecting figured music for your choir, simply see whether the composer of such music is a friend of and an expert in the Gregorian Chant. Such friends of Gregorian Chant were the famous masters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as Palestrina and Orlando Lasso. It is for this reason that several councils, principally the Provincial Council of Cologne, (1860) recommended these composers by name. It is true, only a few choirs can perform the music of such

masters, but there are other composers who studied both the Gregorian Chant and the style of Palestrina. Appreciating the needs of our average choirs, they arranged their compositions so that we now have good church music for the large and long trained choirs of our cathedrals as well as for the few and unskilled singers of our country missions. Only give Plain Chant once more the first place in our musical repertoires and all profane music will soon disappear from the house of God. In order to comply with the requirements of ecclesiastical legislation in regard to sacred music, every pastor should try to secure a competent organist and choir-master, who knows the rubrics of the Church and is willing to abide by them. Therefore the organist should be, above all, a good and exemplary Catholic; he should, secondly, be able to sing and teach Gregorian Chant; and, thirdly, he should know how to handle his instrument, not according to his own fancy, but to what the sacred functions demand. The preludes, interludes, postludes and accompaniments ought, as a rule, not be his own make, but the reproduction of good and church-like organ composition. A great deal remains to be done in this country to bring about a complete reformation of our church music, and it is the imperative duty of all pastors to co-operate towards this end as much as they can. Bishops alone in their councils and synods cannot succeed if the clergy does not lend them a helping hand.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

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ARTICLE I.THE ESSENCE OF THE SACRAMENT AND ITS IMPORTANCE  
FOR THE PRACTICAL MINISTRY.

91. Man created after God's own image, and endowed with sanctifying grace in the beginning, had the misfortune to lose sight of his exalted position and his eternal destiny by falling into sin. This original guilt contracted by our first parents, faith tells us, has put its stamp upon every human being born into this world. We, indeed, would have been lost forever if the wisdom of the Blessed Trinity had not, in the Mystery of the Incarnation, found a means to release us from the abyss of misery which had become our lot. The Son of God Himself deigned to assume our nature and to die for our sake that He might satisfy the justice of His Father and effect a reconciliation between man and his Creator. "*Vere languores nostros ipse tulit et dolores nostros ipse portavit. Ipse autem vulneratus est propter iniquitates nostras attritus est propter scelera nostra et livore ejus sanati sumus.*" (Isaias, c. 53. 4. 5.) But how is this reconciliation to be understood? Is there nothing required on our part? Oh, yes; indeed! Do penance. This is the cry which St. Peter, in his first sermon on Pentecost, uttered. Ever since pen-

ance has been made the "*conditio sine qua non*" towards regaining that grace which, through our sins, we had the misfortune to lose. What, however, is penance? Its very name (*poena*) points to things which are painful, hard and burdensome. In committing sin we follow the cravings of our nature; therefore it is but just that, in order to destroy sin again, this rebellious nature of ours be punished by acts contrary to its lusts and desires. Our will must feel sorry for the offences of the past, it must be ready to shun all sin in future, we must pray and sigh for forgiveness, implore the mercy of Heaven, shed tears of compunction, mortify the senses of the body by fasting and other self-denial. All this is penance, provided that in performing such acts we do not trust to our own merits, but that we place our sole hope in the merits of Christ. Furthermore feeling the sting of sin, the remorse of conscience, we cannot help crying out with the Psalmist: "*Delicta quis intelligit? Ab occultis meis munda me et ab alienis parce servo tuo.*" We long for an outward and sensible means which will give the assurance that our works of penance have been accepted, and that we have been received again into the grace and friendship of God. Here our Blessed Redeemer has come to our assistance. In Baptism the Sacrament of regeneration we receive that first grace, which washes away all stain of sin with which our soul is infected. In Penance the Sacrament of reconciliation, all sins committed after Baptism are forgiven and the first love is restored. "*Quoniam Deus dives in misericordia cognovit figmentum nostrum, illis etiam vitae remedium contulit, qui se postea in peccatis servitutem et daemonis potestatem tradidissent, sacramentum videlicet poenitentiae, quo lapsis post Baptismum beneficium mortis Christi applicatur.*" (Conc. Trid. sess. XIV. c. 1.)

92. The two Sacraments, Baptism and Penance, though they produce pretty much the same effect, both having in view the remission of sin, yet differ greatly in their mode and application. The Council of Trent, refer-

ing to this difference, says: "Hos (quos Christus Dominus lavacro baptismi sui corporis membra semel effecit) si se postea crimine aliquo contaminaverint, non jam repetito baptismo ablui, quum id in ecclesia catholica nulla ratione liceat, sed ante hoc tribunal tamquam reos sisti voluit, ut per sacerdotum sententiam non semel, sed quoties ab admissis peccatis ad ipsum poenitentes confugerint possent liberari." (Conc. Trid. sess. XIV. c. II.) The Sacrament of Penance is a holy tribunal in which judgment is performed, the judge being the absolving priest, the accused party the penitent. Unlike, however, as is done in other courts, the accused, though found guilty, is not condemned, but pardoned, under the condition that he feels sorry for his evil deeds and be ready to avoid sin in future. Certain acts therefore are required on our part. We must accuse ourselves (this is done through confession); we must regret our past offences by a true and sincere contrition. Both confession and contrition presuppose a thorough examination of conscience and include the intention to satisfy divine justice by penitential works. Moral theology gives specified rules as to what is to be observed in these various acts. It may be enough for us to state here that the contrition must be internal, supernatural, supreme, and universal. A merely outward contrition (viz., recitation of a formula, etc.), is insufficient. Our sorrow besides, must be based on supernatural motives suggested by Faith, such as the love of God, the fear of eternal punishment; we must hate sin more than all other evils, and we must extend our sorrow and hatred to all sins we have ever committed. In our confessions we are not allowed to conceal a mortal sin wilfully and therefore we must examine ourselves beforehand with that care which the importance of the affair calls for. All this requires energy, shame, confusion and humiliation on our part, wherefore the Sacrament of Penance is justly styled "*Baptismus laboriosus*."

93. The priest, that he may hear confessions and act



as judge, needs jurisdiction. The jurisdiction empowering him to absolve those whom he deems worthy, he must procure from the ordinary of the diocese, within which the confessions are heard. Without such jurisdiction, the absolution is null and void. In case of death, however (in *periculo* and not only in *articulo mortis*), by a general law of the Church the power to absolve is granted to each and every priest. In giving faculties for the confessional the ordinary of the diocese may add certain restrictions not only in the form of reserved cases, but also in other ways. Thus you may receive faculties simply for a certain place (parish, convent, etc.), for a limited time, for particular persons. If so, then you must not overstep your power. Each priest should read carefully the written document and its various clauses by which the faculties of the diocese are forwarded to him. Whenever you invite priests from other dioceses, seculars or regulars, to help you at a mission or at similar occasions, do not omit to procure for them the necessary faculties from your own bishop and instruct them beforehand as to how far their jurisdiction goes. Mistakes in this line may lead to bad consequences.

94. No Sacrament has such an exclusively pastoral character as the Sacrament of Penance, for it presents to us the priest as "pastor ovium," as the shepherd who goes in search of the lost sheep, and who, after having found it among thorns or in desert places, takes it on his shoulders and brings it back to the fold. The work performed in the administration of this Sacrament, in the seclusion of the confessional, is strictly private and remains hidden, perceptible only to the penitent himself and to the all-seeing eye of God. Its effects, however good or bad, as the case may be, are felt also outside. Take, for instance, a zealous, learned and practical confessor, who is not satisfied with simply listening to the sins whispered to him, but who also tries in every way possible to uproot sin and vice from the penitent's heart, how much moral and social evil will he not prevent! The restoration of ill-gotten goods, the

reconciliation of enemies, the re-establishment of peace and harmony in a household or family, the fostering of charity, justice, sobriety, temperance, in a word, the flourishing of all Christian virtues are his work. He has laid the seed which, with God's grace and help, has ripened into fruit. If a parish or congregation was fortunate enough to be under the guidance of such a spiritual Father, such a confessor for a number of years, the good result will be noticed yet in future generations. There is no more effectual means to reform a Catholic community than the wise and prudent administration of the Sacrament of Penance. It is a remedy applied to individual souls, but so that the whole body and commonwealth of the people derives advantage from it and shares in its fruits.

95. Great and manifold are the obligations laid upon the shoulders of a confessor. No man, it is true, is lost except by his own fault. But this does not hinder that also others, either directly or indirectly, may have a share in such loss and become more or less responsible for it. One imprudent word, one too severe rebuke, one too lax decision given by a confessor who is not considerate enough and too hasty in his functions, may cause the eternal ruin of an immortal soul. Will the Divine Judge not ask an account of the disaster wrought by his legate? "*E manus tuas animam ejus petam,*" God said to the prophet. May no confessor ever forget what formidable consequences his action could have. May he well ponder over the words of St. Theresa: "Confessors not sufficiently learned have done great harm to my soul; a well-learned confessor has never deceived me. Those others, indeed, did not intend to deceive me, but they were not enough posted. They told me sometimes that a thing was no sin, whilst it was at least a venial offence, and of mortal sin they made but venial sin. This has done me great harm, so that you may understand why I refer to this great evil as a warning to others." In the confessional the priest has to deal with individual persons who, laden with spiritual

leprosy, viz., sin, approach him in the hope of finding a cure for their disease. The confessor, in trying to effect this cure, must be a man of sound judgment, well acquainted with the obligations of his office, a man of knowledge, both theoretical and practical. In the vast field of moral theology he should be perfectly at home, be familiar with the general principles and the frequently occurring cases. The mere fact of having studied this branch of sacred science once in the seminary or during the years preceding ordination, does not warrant its knowledge for the future. Unless such study be continued afterward, new decisions and new points be taken notice of, there is danger that but too much will be forgotten and false judgments will be passed. Moreover, a good confessor ought not to neglect the science of the saints, *i. e.*, ascetic theology laid down in books written by men who enjoy a good reputation in this regard, who are sound and reliable in their teachings, neither too strict nor too lax. Moral theology," says Bishop Ullathorne (ecclesiastical discourses), "has two branches; the one regards the judgment of sin; the other the cultivation of virtue. . . . This other branch is that which is properly called spiritual or ascetical theology; it fits the priest to guide souls in the more generous way towards God and to build them up in virtue and holiness, for it supplies the motives and the means for advancing in the way of perfect life."

96. The hearing of confessions is often a sore trial to the priest. He may suffer both as to body and to soul. To sit still in a narrow place, and this for several hours in succession, as the case may be, to inhale the breath of persons face to face with yourself, to bear the cold of the winter and the heat of the summer, is rather wearisome. Still harder is the strain wrought upon the mind. The confessor is responsible for each penitent; he is bound to examine every single case, lest through his fault a soul redeemed by the precious Blood of Christ be lost. Moreover, though diving, as it were, continually into the very

abyss of crime and wretchedness, of carnal lust and filth, he shall keep himself pure from all moral abomination. This requires great energy and a keen perception of the malice contained in sin. Here, indeed, lies a danger. The medical student, when first entering the room of dissection, may be horrified at the scene before him. Gradually, however, he gets used to it, and he goes to his work as to a common affair, without fear or sensation, and it may be good for him. The young priest, just commencing to hear confessions, naturally will stand appalled when confronted at once with the various sins men are wont to commit. Sins, which hitherto he has known only from books or in theory, now are brought home to him in their ghastly reality and their full hideousness. But what is good for the medical student and physician is not good for the minister of God, the priest, the confessor. He must ever retain a deep horror for sin. Thus he himself will keep aloof from it and he shall be able to make others avoid it. Often, therefore, should he pray with the Psalmist: "*Pone Domine custodiam ori meo et ostium circumstantiae labiis meis ut non declinet cor meum in verba malitiæ ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis.*"

97. However, the hearing of confessions is also a source of grace and blessing for the priest. By means of it he obtains a deep insight into the human heart and thus becomes endowed with a great deal of practical knowledge, enabling him to give the proper consolation and to tender the right advice. Moreover, the Holy Tribunal is a constant monitor for the priest. Not only great sinners, but also truly pious penitents present themselves. Being made aware of the humility, charity, devotion, zeal, etc., which they exhibit he cannot help but be encouraged and stimulated to virtue lest the rebuke of St. Paul might fall upon him: "*In quo alium judicas, teipsum condemnas.*" Finally, what shall we say about the constant mortification which the work of hearing confessions demands? If a priest desires to do penance for his own sins, to satisfy

divine justice, whose very mouth-piece he himself is, let him frequently enter the confessional to perform that service, of which our Saviour speaks in the Gospel: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." *Divinum illud sacri judicii munus anxie refugiendum non est, sed accedendum cum magno zelo divinae gloriae ampliandae et salutis animarum promovendae et versandum in illo cum bonitate Dei.*" (*Instructio Eystettensis.*)

98. When and where shall confessions be heard? A zealous pastor must be ready to receive the confession of any person who reasonably asks him to do so, viz., who is either in the state of mortal sin or at least justly expects a particular benefit and grace from the reception of the Sacrament. However, there are certain days on which you ought always to be at the service of your parishioners, on which they expect you to be ready for them in the confessional. On Saturday evenings, and on Sunday mornings, on Holy days of obligation, and their vigils, usually some penitents will come, often many, and it is not proper to let them wait too long or first call upon you. "*Ne qua igitur mora confiteri volentes praepediat, pastores animarum enixe hortamur, ut apud confessionalia ad penitentes audiendos praesto sint singulis Sabbatis, Festorumque vespertino saltem tempore et Dominicis festisque diebus mane ante primam missam. His enim horis non desunt poenitentes, modo confessarius suo ipsi muneri non desit. Sin autem fidelium numerus major sit, quam ut omnes, qui accedunt, uno die audire possit, alia etiam tempora, alios dies eligat, quos huic tam necessario operi impendat. Gravissimum quidem crimen foret si pastoris negligentia aut desidia vel unus e grege fidelium hoc sacramento fraudaretur. Nequi ii facile animum inducent, ut ad confitendum redeant, qui semel atque iterum hoc ministerium ipsi sacerdoti ingratum ac molestum esse deprehenderint.*" (*Conc. Baltim. II., n. 291.*) The proper place to hear confessions is the church. Furthermore, they must be received

in the confessional, which ought to be constructed so that there is a partition between the priest and the penitent, both conversing with each other through a small grate. "Confessionalia in ecclesia erigenda pro mulierum confessionibus excipiendis\* decrevit Concilium primum Baltimoreense, quod districte servandum omnino est. Ecclesiae autem nomine ad confessiones audiendas sacristia non est intelligenda, nisi locus sit publicus et patens." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 296.) The rubric prescribe that the priest sitting in the Holy Tribunal should be vested in surplice and stole (violacei coloris). The formula of absolution, as it is found in the ritual, ought to be pronounced completely, unless there be a reasonable cause to shorten it, in which case you may commence with the words "Dominus noster Jesus Christus." A few more practical hints are the following: Do not speak too loud in the confessional, as this will frighten the penitent and may break the seal of confession. Do not allow people to stand too near; make them observe order and decorum whenever there is a crowd; at night and during the dark always have a light in the church. Before and after confession, when passing through the sanctuary, kneel down for a few minutes at the altar of the Blessed Sacrament to say a short prayer. Finally, take the utmost care never to violate the "sigillum confessionis." The direct violation is a thing altogether unheard of, but the indirect violation is wont to occur occasionally. Be very prudent in your talk and action concerning matters which you know only through confessions. Do not make any allusions of this kind, and should they be ever so harmless, in presence of lay people even in sermons. "Id enim jure merito haud parum scandali apud

\* In the archdiocese of Milwaukee priests are forbidden, "sub poena suspensionis ipso facto incurrendae" ever to hear the confession of a woman without a grate. This applies also to missions and stations where no church exists, where Mass is said and confessions are heard in private houses.



auditores parit, verbum Dei ludibrio exponit et ipsum sacramentum reddit odiosum." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 290.)

## ARTICLE II.

### THE DIFFERENT OFFICES OF THE CONFESSOR.

#### A—OFFICIUM PATRIS.

99. A priest, in undertaking to hear confessions, at once assumes several offices or charges which he is expected to execute with great care and circumspection that thus his ministry may become fruitful. The first office is that of a spiritual father. "Patrem agere decet, qui evangelici patris instar, filium exulem perditum, fame, squalore consumptum, libens osculo pacis redeuntem excipiat, prima stola induat vitulo saginato exquisitissimisque epulis reficiat atque in pristinum haeredis ac filii locum et dignitatem reponat." (Conc. Baltim. II., 279.) "The priest bears the tender name of Father," says Cardinal Gibbons, "a title which he shares with his eternal Father, from whom all paternity in Heaven and on earth is named." "For if you have ten thousand instructors," says the Apostle, "yet not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus by the Gospel I have begotten you." The confessor in particular is called Father both because through his ministry the penitent is born to spiritual life, is made a child of God again, and because people flock to him to seek consolation and shelter from the wounds which life's battle has left on their souls. His heart ought to burn with a holy zeal, enabling him to exclaim with St. Paul: "Quis infirmatur et ego non infirmor, quis scandalizatur et ego non uror?"

100. The priest, that he may be a true father to his penitents, has need of charity and patience. Harsh treatment, cross words, severe scolding are improper in the confessional. On the pulpit, in his sermons and exhortations,



addressed to a large crowd, a priest may sometimes make use of sharp language, may expound the doctrine of faith and the rules of moral in a manner suitable to inspire his hearers with terror and fear, but never should he do this in the confessional, where he has to deal with individuals. It will have the very opposite effect; instead of melting the heart of the penitent and withdrawing him from his wicked ways, it will, as a rule, render him all the more obstinate. Our Blessed Redeemer has furnished us the best example in this regard. In His speeches and addresses made before the public, He did not shrink from telling them in plain truth, and even by terrific words, that they were wrong, that they were sinners, outcasts, hypocrites, the offspring of vipers; that, if they continued in their evil ways, the wrath of God would come upon them, etc. However, just observe with what kindness and love He receives the individual persons accosting Him to seek pardon and consolation. Think of Mary Magdalene, the woman caught in adultery; St. Peter, after his fall; and even Judas, the traitor. We ought to bear in mind that it is quite a sacrifice for a man laden with sin and crime to come of his own accord and accuse himself, open his conscience in full detail before his fellow-man who also is mortal and sinful. This act as such deserves credit and encouragement. Therefore a confessor must avoid all harshness and bitterness, even towards those who seem to be indisposed and unworthy of absolution; this will help to soften the heart of the most wicked, whilst otherwise a sting will be left and the poor penitent may feel like a reprobate, like a child to whom, instead of bread, a stone is given. Indeed, a priest ought to be careful not to manifest signs of impatience or anger that arise from external sources. For instance, you are called upon to hear a confession at a time that suits you least, say, when you do not feel well, early in the morning or late at night, when you have visitors at home, when you wish to go on a journey; or, shortly before you entered the confessional, you met with an unpleasant affair that pro-

voked your anger. Never let the penitent feel this anger and passionate mood of yours. Do not get restless when some other matter is awaiting you, when you wish to get ready for Mass, for a sick call, etc. Do not take out your watch so as to tell your penitent that he might hurry, if his confession should perhaps be unusually long, and if you have been sitting several hours already. Uncautiousness of this kind may lead to sacrilegious confessions or at least hinder people from drawing out of the fountain of spiritual grace all strength and consolation of which they stand in need. Fatherly love, meekness and kindness, is what the penitent expects to meet with. Any rude or abrupt manner on the part of the confessor will repel him and cause him to stay away from the Sacraments perhaps for a long time, if not forever. "You are not," says Hugo of St. Victor, "appointed judges of crimes to chastise, but judges of maladies to heal."

101. A charitable and loving air, manifested even in the very tone of your voice, should pervade the whole confession from beginning to end. Try to help the poor sinner in every way possible. Many are very awkward in confessing; they have not examined their conscience well, hoping that the Father confessor will ask them; others tell long stories not appertaining at all to the "materia confessionis;" others, again, display a great deal of malice and stolidity; others, finally, tremble and fear. All these must be treated with the utmost kindness. Encourage them at once, when you notice them to be slow or reluctant in telling their sins. Do not sigh, move your head or make other signs of surprise, when you happen to hear formidable things; on the contrary, try to keep quiet; do not interrupt the penitent, but let him tell all that he has to say, that he may have a chance to unburden his conscience freely and completely. "*Poenitentes leniter ac paterno more excipiat, et quamdiu a sacro tribunali abfuerint interroget; deinde peccata sua narrantes patienter audiat neque (quod Rituale Romanum monet) inter-*

pellet, nisi ad obscurius dicta nelius intelligenda. Etiam atrocia facinora aut turpissima fatentes immoto vultu audiat neque suspiriis aut aliqua voce vel gestu corporisve aut oris motu, mirantis aut horrescentis animi indicia prodant. Quinimmo poenitentem, si timore aut metu laborare deprehenderit, humanissimis verbis alloquatur; horteturque, ut bono animo et magna fiducia peccata omnia in sinum clementissimi Patris effundere non erubescat, summiq; Praeceptoris exemplo proposito sibi gaudio confusionem contemnat." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 280.) It is indeed necessary to admonish the sinner, in order to make him understand his miserable state and the danger of damnation, to which he is exposed; but this must be done in the end, when the whole accusation is over, immediately before absolution. The admonition ought to be charitable, not too long and practical, not only a commonplace talk.

102. The love which a confessor bears his penitents is the fruit of the supernatural zeal with which his heart burns. Therefore it is expected to be a disinterested and wise love, no natural or human affection. In the confessional there is no room for distinction between rich and poor, learned and ignorant, high and low. They are all sinners, all fraught with spiritual malady and leprosy. If there be any preference, then it ought to be given to those who are the more abandoned, whose conscience is the much more loaded with guilt, and whose spiritual cure requires more labor on the part of the confessor. "Atque in primis promptum semper paratumque se exhibeat, cum fuerit ad hoc munus obeundum accersitus, praesertim ab egenis et vilioris conditionis hominibus atque iis, quos peccatorum sarcina onustos esse aut a confessione diu abfuisse noverit. His sine mora omni pothabito negotio praesto sit; et in horum gratiam, si necesse sit divites hujus saeculi piosque ac devotos saepius confiteri solitos, praecipue autem mulieres, quibus tempus et otium abunde suppetit, aut negligat aut expectare jubeat, donec male habentibus, qui medico magis egent fuerit satisfactum."

(Con. Baltim. II., n. 280.) If you happen to meet with such a poor penitent, whose state of conscience demands extraordinary attention, thank God for the grace thus awarded you; bestow upon him all your solicitude, and do not mind those who are outside of the confessional waiting, even if their number should be large and some have no chance to confess at that time at all. For these latter you are not responsible, only for those whose confession you have heard or commenced to hear. Your love, great as it is and ought to be, must never degenerate into laxity. Too much rigor leads to despair, but too much indulgence begets presumption. Let your charity be wise, *i. e.*, let it be regulated by sound moral principles. Lay aside all human respect and declare, if necessary, as St. John the Baptist did to the adulterous Herod: “*Hoc non licet;*” but do it always in kind words according to the maxim: “*Fortiter in re, suaviter in modo.*”

#### B—OFFICIUM MEDICI SPIRITUALIS.

103. The second office incumbent on the priest whilst hearing confessions is that of a spiritual physician. He is bound not only to heal the wounds inflicted upon the soul in the past, by diffusing the oil of divine grace through absolution, but also to provide for the future; he must remove the poisonous germ of the spiritual disease, *i. e.*, sin, as far as possible, lest the wounds break open again and cause a new disaster; he must add strength and power to prevent relapses. “*Confessarius ut de munere suo rite administrato conscientiae suae respondere queat, non modo salutis initium in confessione rite peracta constitutum curare debet, sed etiam tenetur peccata ex anima poenitentis prorsus evellere, habitus vitiosos destruere, passiones et inordinatas inclinationes, quae sunt radices et reliquiae peccatorum, disperdere, occasiones proximas dissipare atque hoc modo morbis animi curationem et medelam adhibere. Namque vices gerit coelestis illius medici, qui in*

Evangelio testatur se venisse ut homines vitam habeant et abundantius quidem habeant." (Instr. Eystett.)

104. As we look for charity in the spiritual Father, thus in like manner we desire to see practical prudence and sagacity in the priest, that he may be qualified well for the charge of a physician of souls. This prudence is not the wisdom of the world, it is not simply common sense, either; it is a virtue, partly natural, partly supernatural, acquired through constant study, through prayer and a faithful discharge of the Sacrament of Penance. "*Ars artium est regimen animarum.*" Nothing is more difficult than to gain control over a man's soul and influence upon his free will, as long as enticing passions, the allurements of the world, the temptations of demons oppose us. Only the power of the Holy Ghost is, after all, able to break through these ranks and to paralyze their evil influence. Therefore, the wisdom of God's Spirit is required, and, no doubt, the future confessor, the priest in his ordination, receives with the power to forgive sins also that charisma called "*discretio spirituum*," not, however, as a fully developed faculty, but as a talent with which he shall work. Nature and grace must be combined, *i. e.*, a priest, to be or to become a good confessor, must not neglect those means which are at his disposal, that he may actually grow into a prudent man. The general rules, therefore, as laid down by spiritual writers, which are but the result of the experience made by many, must not be despised, but be borne well in mind. "*Experientia quidem optima in his rebus magistra est, sed cum nemo sibimetipsi prorsus fidere possit, consilium virorum prudentum et doctorum necnon probatissimorum auctorum haud parvi pendatur. Stultissimi enim sunt, qui alta de se opinione capti, omne aliudum iudicium spernunt, de nulla re dubitant et in quovis casu audacter quasi ex tripode decernunt.*" (Instr. Eystett.)

105. A good physician, by a correct diagnosis, tries first of all to determine the nature of the disease. Then,

having located the seat of it, in his prescriptions he arranges his medicines so that they will work with all power upon that part or organ of the body to destroy the germs of the sickness. Afterwards, when the crisis is over, he also forwards remedies, by means of which the whole system, much weakened through the specific disease, may again be built up and the patient be restored to his full vigor and health. The very same rule should be followed in spiritual matters. The confessor must endeavor to trace what ascetics call the predominant passion. That passion, being the main source of the divers sins the penitent is wont to commit, must first of all be crushed. With some this passion is pride, with others sensuality, with others, again, an insatiable desire of money and worldly gain, with others anger, etc. When you have heard the confession, try to discover the principal fault of the penitent. Then give the right remedies for this fault first and wait with the rest of the sins till later, or at least do not attempt to apply too many remedies at once. "It is necessary, above all," says St. Alphonsus, "to attend to the subjugation of the predominate passion. Some are careful to mortify themselves in many things, but make little effort to conquer the passion to which they are most inclined; such persons can never advance in the way of God. He who allows any irregular passion to rule over him is in great danger of being lost. But, on the other hand, he who subdues the predominate passion will easily conquer all his other passions. When the strongest enemy is vanquished, it is easy to defeat less powerful foes."

106. In the confessional you are dealing with individual souls. What is therefore good for one may not be good for the other. St. Augustine says: "*Quia cum omnibus eadem debeatur caritas, non eadem omnibus adhibenda est medicina.*" For example: there comes to confession a young girl apparently innocent, and devoid of impure passion, saying that she has gone to parties and dances once in a while, accompanied by her brother, sister,



parent; asked about sins she may have committed, viz., bad thoughts, impure desires, lustful actions, she answers in the negative; it would be wrong to forbid her at once never to go thither again. Another one comes and confesses that, whilst taking part in the amusements mentioned, she yielded to temptation almost every time. Such a penitent must be reminded of the duty she has to shun occasions which directly lead into sin. But, perhaps she replies that there is a sort of necessity. Then the confessor must ask about particulars, and it may be well to wait and render the occasion more remote. A physician will not cut off a tumor or amputate a limb at once, unless it be certain that delay will make things worse. The individual case, as such, with all its particulars must be handled carefully according to the rule: "*Salus poenitentis, salus animae est suprema lex.*"

107. Distinction must be made between sex and age. Women are apt to follow their feelings, momentary emotions and passionate sentiments. With them it may be enough to appeal to their imagination. Not so with men, who are accustomed to reason and to judge, and to go to the bottom of things. If you wish to succeed with them you are compelled to bring forth arguments which convince the intellect, you must appeal to their honor and arouse their ambition. Again, young people ought to be treated differently from those who have come to a settled age. The former may need a check of their enthusiasm,\* the latter must, perhaps, be stirred up lest they sink into spiritual lethargy. Regard should be taken of a person's occupation. The laborer, the mechanic, who has to work hard from morning till night to make a scanty living, often becomes careless about his religious obligations. Envy, jealousy, drunkenness, play havoc with him. A wise confessor will not fail to remind him that he has also duties towards God, that he should be content with the lot assigned him, that by humbly accepting his situation he will be able to lay up merits for heaven. Rich and well-



to-do people must be told that they should make a good use of the things Providence has awarded them; that they should help and support the poor. Not only the city capitalists, but wealthy farmers sometimes acquire such a greediness for money that they seem to forget entirely what they owe to God and His Church.

108. In nothing do men differ so much as in their temperaments. What the face is to the body this the temperament is to the soul, namely, the sharp expression and the characteristic mark of the individual. There are four temperaments: the melancholy, the phlegmatic, the sanguine, and the choleric. They hardly ever exist singly, but are more or less mingled in a person. Like the passions so also the temperaments have their good and their evil features. A confessor, in his quality of spiritual physician, ought to be skillful first to discover the kind of temperament the penitent is possessed of, and next to use such temperament in the proper manner, to cut off what is bad and to foster what is laudable about it. "A carver," says Scaramelli (*Directorium Asceticum*), "must know the qualities of the various woods in which he wishes to work; that some are soft, some hard, some knotty, some easily split, and some apt to splinter; otherwise, being mistaken in the material, he will not be able to carry on his work; so, too, a spiritual director will not succeed in leading his penitents if he does not understand their different temperaments and if he fail to adapt with great prudence his direction to the individual character of each one."

109. Great caution and circumspection is needed in assigning the means to avoid particular sins and to break certain bad habits. The general means are: 1, prayer, especially at the moment of temptation; 2, novenas in honor of the saints; 3, frequent use of the Sacraments, chiefly for those who are addicted to sins of lust; 4, the Sacrifice of Mass; 5, fasting and mortification. These general means may be made use of against almost any sin

or sinful habit. Besides these, however, special remedies must be advised for particular faults. A prudent confessor will not fail, with God's grace and help, to detect the right thing which appears to be the most wholesome and salubrious for his penitent. If, with all the precautions you have taken and all the remedies you have suggested, no perceptible change and improvement occurs, you must not lose confidence; sooner or later the penitent, if he only continues earnestly to use the means which are at his disposal, will reform. The effects of the medicine applied for the healing of corporal maladies are not felt at once, either, they need time for development.

## C—OFFICIUM DOCTORIS.

110. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who came into this world as a light to enlighten those who were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, was not satisfied with teaching truth before the public, in presence of large crowds or before a select body of men. The Incarnate Wisdom of God deigned to give instructions now and then to individual persons. who sought His society looking for counsel and information adapted to their particular wants and necessities. Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene, Zaccheus, the rich young man aspiring after perfection, are instances of this kind. Entrusting His apostles with the same power He had received from on high, and ordering them to teach all nations, He did not wish to have this ministry of theirs limited to public preaching and speaking, but, as His very example proves, His intention was that they should be a light not only for the world at large, but for single individuals as well. The place to make use of this individual instruction is the confessional, as in it the priest is made the confidant of the innermost secrets of a person's heart. "Maxime itaque condemnanda est praxis illorum non tam confessoriorum quam mercenariorum, qui vix peccatis obiter auditis, tamquam nihil nisi latine loqui didicissent,

omni manu absolvere festinant. Nam et eos docere tene-mur, qui licet venalia tantum habeant, vivere tamen debent de verbo, quod procedit ex ore Dei, et de omni quidem verbo, sive procedit publice e cathedra sive privatim in sacro tribunali." (Instr. Eyst.)

111. In our general remarks concerning the ministry of the Sacred Tribunal, made above, we have stated that a confessor must be endowed with knowledge. Here it may be asked, how far is this knowledge to extend? Benedict XIV. says: "Optandum quidem esset, ut quilibet confessarius ea polleret scientia, quam eminentem vocant; verum quum haec dos paucorum sit, necesse omnino est, ut competenti saltem scientia sit instructus." St. Alphonsus, explaining this "competens scientia," remarks: "A confessor ought to know: (a), the difference between mortal and venial sins; (b), the species and circumstances of sins; (c) the doctrine of restitution; (d), reserved cases, and the ordinary excommunications; (e), the requisites of the Sacrament of Penance. However, not only a knowledge of moral, but also of dogmatic theology and Sacred Scripture is necessary, because not unfrequently the confessor will have to base his admonitions on both, or he may have to clear away doubts concerning the various articles of Faith.

112. Prudence again must tell a confessor how far he may go in his private instructions. Not all things are good for every one. St. Paul was wont to give milk to children, but substantial food to those who were strong in virtue. Many penitents do not know the very rudiments of Faith. They must first be taught the "dogmata fide explicita tenenda" before absolution. Others are totally ignorant about the requisites of Penance, as to what is contrition, purpose of amendment, etc. They must be given to understand the exact meaning of them. Others, again, have formed a false conscience in regard to certain sins; mortal sins they consider as venial, or *vice versa*. Let them be disabused of their wrong opinions. Some do not

realize the obligation they have of making restitution for frauds and thefts, for slander and detraction; these ought to be told what reparation is required on their part in behalf of those whom they have injured. Many, especially such as hold an office of authority (parents, magistrates, superiors), are not fully aware of the duties incumbent upon them; their attention, therefore, must be called to them, their mind be awakened as to the responsibilities they have. People doubting on certain points and asking for information cannot be left in such doubt, because then they would always sin.—*Uxoribus quaerentibus de debito conjugali necnon aliis interrogantibus particularia in materia turpi breviter et maxima cautela confessarius respondeat et semper id solum, quod fuerit quaesitum, nunquam plus.*—Penitents showing a tendency for perfection ought to be encouraged and directed on the high road of sanctity. “*Non modo peccata emendari sed et virtutes induci atque augeri debent. Suis itaque admonitionibus confessarius conetur accendere in poenitente vivum proficiendi in virtute desiderium ardens quidem, ut nihil nisi virtutem sapiat et forte, ut contra omnes difficultates animum erigat, efficax quoque, ut virtutes operetur in omni loco, tempore et occasione constantes. Conetur poenitentem paulatim per gradus perfectionis ducere in semita justorum, quae quasi lux splendens procedit et crescit usque ad diem perfectum, demonstrando videlicet vias ad perfectionem obtinendam et non modo communes sed etiam cujusvis statui conditioni et viribus convenientes.*” (Instr. Eystett.) It is evident how much those priests fail who, satisfied with the little which they learned as students, hardly again open a book treating on theological matters.

## D—OFFICIUM JUDICIS.

113. The principal office which a confessor has charge of is that of a judge. We say the principal office, because in and through it he acts precisely as “minister

sacramenti." The priest is authorized not simply to declare that forgiveness is granted or withheld, he himself passes the sentence, though only as the representative of the Most High. "*Quamvis absolutio sacerdotis alieni beneficii sit dispensatio, tamen non est solum nudum ministerium vel annunciandi evangelium vel declarandi remissa esse peccata; sed ad instar actus judicialis, quo ab ipso velut a iudice sententia pronuntiatur.*" (Conc. Trid. sess. XIV. c. 6.) "So wondrous," says Cardinal Gibbons, "is this faculty of forgiving sins that, when our Saviour exercised this merciful prerogative, the Scribes exclaimed: 'Who can forgive sins but God?' For hitherto this was an exercise of jurisdiction delegated by the Almighty neither to prophet, priest, nor angel. Kingly authority affects only the outward acts of man. Sacerdotal authority penetrates into the sanctuary of the soul. Earthly judges punish crime, even though the criminal abhors his guilt; it is the priestly privilege to pardon the repentant sinner. The sentence of the earthly judge is restricted to the temporal life of man, that of the Lord's anointed extends to the regions of eternity." The exercise of this judicial charge implies three distinct acts: The confessor must take cognizance of the sins committed; he must judge as to the disposition of the penitent, and, according to it, either absolve or withhold absolution; he must impose a penance to satisfy for past offenses.

114. The nature of the Sacred Tribunal demands a sincere and accurate confession of all those mortal sins which, after a careful examination of conscience, a person has called to his mind. "*Peccatorum confessio, qualem Christus instituit, Ecclesiaeque suae perpetuo retinendum tradidit, integra esse debet. Oportet enim, ut omnia et singula mortalia peccata complectatur, quorum post diligens, examen sibi quisque conscius sit; etiamsi occulta sint et ab hominum oculis remota; aut non re et actu patrata, sed mente tantum et voluntate concepta.*" (Conc. Baltim. II. n. 275.) Again, it is necessary in this self-

accusation to tell the single sins according to what is called "species infima." Finally, the number must be added and such circumstances which alter the ultimate species. The obligation to give a complete statement rests, first of all, with the penitent himself. However, too many penitents, through ignorance or carelessness, fail to accuse themselves in the manner prescribed. In these cases it becomes the imperative duty of the confessor, as "minister sacramenti," to supply the defect. He must question the penitent, that thus he may get a more accurate knowledge of the sins committed. "*Si poenitens numerum et species et circumstantias peccatorum explicatu necessarias non expresserit, eum sacerdos prudenter interroget. Sed caveat, ne curiosus aut inutitibus interrogationibus quemquam detineat, praesertim juniores utriusque sexus vel alios de eo, quod ignorant, imprudenter interrogans ne scandalum patiantur indeque peccare discant.*" (Rit. Rom.) It requires a sort of dexterity to put the questions in the proper form. Do not be too scrupulous in this affair; do not inquire about circumstances of which the penitent, in committing sin, hardly thought, or which, in his own examination of conscience, he would never strike upon. In regard to the number (many penitents never mention it) of habitual sins, only ask how often as an average, how often a day, a week, a month, the sin has been committed.—In materia turpi melius est deficere quam ad obtinendam integritatem scandalum parere—Segneri justly says: "*Cupio magnopere te parcum gravemque esse interrogando circa materiam luxuriae, ne tibi accidat, quod pictori, qui cum Helenam exquisita diligentia depingeret ejusdem cupiditate exardescere coepit et accendi. Utere proinde verborum modestia, et quamvis subinde circumstantia maneret tecta, quae alioquin ad integritatem materiale spectaret, nihil interest: Aliud enim bonum magis praevallet. Adeo foetet palus ista ut consultum non sit vel a poenitente vel a confessario, ubi opus non sit, moveri: sufficit requirere speciem patrati sceleris, non vero*"



modum: et si ipsi vel ex irrevocundia vel ex ignorantia hunc vellent declarare suaviter mone, necessarium non esse. Expediret hac in re imitari Philosophum illum, qui veritus, ne loquendo os conspurcaret, carbone descripsit." (Segneri, Confessarius instructus). As a rule you should always let the penitent speak first and not interrupt him. Then commence to interrogate, but do it in a kind and discreet way. It may be disputed whether the confessor should limit the questions to the matter confessed, or should also touch upon other things. We believe that a prudent confessor will soon discover "cujus spiritus sit poenitens." If he has sufficient reason to suspect that not all has been said, then he, indeed, may and ought to insert a question like this: "People of your age, or in your circumstances, often commit such and such sins. Tell me, did you ever commit this sin? Be not afraid; I am ready to help you." Saintly confessors, such as St. Leonardo de Porto Maurizio, St. Philip Neri, have followed this practice, and by it, in more than one case, obtained wholesome results. Old festering wounds may thus be opened, and the sins concealed in sacrilegious confessions, carried on for several years, be brought to light. "Et dixit Dominus ad me," says the prophet Ezechiel, (viii. 8.) "Fili hominis fode parietem, et cum fodissem parietem apparuit ostium unum. Et dixit ad me: ingredere et vide abominationes pessimas, quas isti faciunt hic."

115. After the sinner, by his own accusation, has furnished testimony against himself, the principal act follows. The confessor will decide whether the delinquent is worthy of absolution or not. "Si enim audita confessione judicaverit (sacerdos) neque in enumerandis peccatis diligentiam, neque in detestandis dolorem poenitenti omnino defuisse, absolvi poterit; sin autem utrumque in eo desiderari animadverterit, auctor illi et suasor erit, ut majorem curam in excutienda conscientia adhibeat, hominemque, ut blandissime poterit, tractatum dimittet." (Catech. Rom., p. ii., c. 59, 51). In judging about the

disposition of the penitent, you ought to follow the golden rule: "*Quisque praesumitur bonus, donec probetur malus.*" The very fact that the sins have been duly specified, that the penitent apparently feels a sincere contrition for the offence committed, and that he is earnestly resolved to shun all mortal sin in future, is enough to consider him as sufficiently disposed. "*Si circumstantiae non ingerunt dubium prudens, quod non sit sufficienter dispositus poenitens, non debet confessarius illum nec se ipsum turbare ob habendam evidentiam, quae possibilis non est.*" (St. Alph. l. 6. n. 461). From those who are properly disposed, absolution cannot be justly withheld, except this be necessary as a remedy and as the sole remedy for a future amendment. We must consider persons as indisposed, who, filled with a mortal hatred against their neighbor, do not wish to lay aside such morbid sentiments; those who do not intend to restore ill-gotten goods or repair an injury caused through slander or evil talk, though it is in their power to do so; such as are living in a voluntary proximate occasion of mortal sin, which they do not intend to quit; who are members of forbidden secret societies and refuse to resign such membership; in a word, all who are wanting in any grave duty and obligation. Whenever you happen to meet with such penitents you must not at once tell them that you cannot absolve them; on the contrary, try by all means possible to change their mind and disposition. "*Sistunt se quidem multi Sacramenti Poenitentiae ministris prorsus imparati, sed persaepe tamen hujusmodi, ut ex imparatis parati fieri possint, si modo sacerdos viscera indutus misericordiae Christi Jesu, qui non venit vocare justos sed peccatores, sciat studiose, patienter et mansuete cum ipsis agere. Quod si praestare praetermittat, profecto non magis ipse dicendus est paratus ad audiendum quam ceteri ad confitendum accedere.*" (Ep. Encyc. Leonis XII. de Jubilaeo, a. 1825). After all your efforts have been in vain you may and ought to refuse absolution. A prudent and zealous confessor will, very

seldom, indeed, be compelled to have recourse to this extreme measure. In most cases he will succeed in changing the wolf into a lamb. Whenever there is really a necessity of withholding absolution, let it be done in a kind and gentle manner. Arrange the matter so that the penitent himself clearly sees that there is no other way, and that you are simply performing your duty. Thus it may be hoped that, with God's grace and help, he will be brought to a better sense of mind sooner or later. Should the disposition simply remain doubtful, you ought to weigh the circumstances and examine whether it will be more beneficial to postpone absolution or to absolve conditionally. Usually now-a-days, and in America especially, you will have to do the latter, because there is great fear lest parties to whom absolution has been refused shall never return. "Studeat confessarius summam illam qua Christus Dominus noster peccatores complecti solebat clementiam ac benignitatem, quantum licet, aemulari. Homines enim quantumvis sceleribus cumulatissimos ceterisque omnibus ob patrata crimina invisos et contemptos, Ipse nunquam aspernabatur aut repellebat. Quod de se Ipse testatur his verbis: Qui venit ad me non ejiciam foras. Neque timendum est sacerdoti, ne Pastoris optimi hac in re sectando exempla muneri suo desit. Haec quidem dispensatio non est severitatis ac rigoris sed indulgentiae et misericordiae sacramentum. Et re quidem vera qui Christi Domini in agendo cum peccatoribus patientiam et charitatem imitandam sibi proposuerit, is non reprehensionem et poenam sed laudem ac praemium ab eo feret, qui non ad bene habentes sed ad aegros sanandos in hunc mundum venit, quique publicanorum ac peccatorum amicus vocari dignatus est." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 284). It is a good thing with the majority of penitents, especially with the common class of people, to excite them to a true and deep contrition before absolution. Do not tell them only to make an act of contrition by themselves, but propose to them divers motives, thus to dispose their hearts

and make them feel really sorry for their sins. Many approach the confessional without a true contrition, or, at least, they omit to make earnest and strong resolutions in respect to the future. A brief admonition, given by the confessor, will supply this defect and secure the validity and fruit of the Sacrament.

116. Whenever the priest makes use of his power of absolving he is ordered to perform another act, which bears a judicial character, that of imposing a penance. "*Debent ergo sacerdotes Domini, quantum spiritus et prudentia suggesserit, pro qualitate criminum et poenitentium facultate salutare et convenientes satisfactiones injungere, ne, si forte peccatis conniveant et indulgentius cum poenitentibus agant, levissima quidem opera pro gravissimis delictis injungendo, alienorum peccatorum participes efficiantur. Habeant autem prae oculis, ut satisfactio quam imponunt, non sit tantum ad novae vitae custodiam et infirmitatis medicamentum, sed etiam ad praeteritorum peccatorum vindictam et castigationem: nam claves sacerdotum non ad solvendum dumtaxat, sed ad ligandum concessas etiam antiqui Patres et credunt et docent.*" (Conc. Trid. sess. XIV. c. 8). Care should be taken, as far as possible, to have the work of penance arranged so that it may fulfill its double purpose, that it may satisfy for sins of the past, and that it may be a remedy against future relapses. For mortal sins only a grave penance should be assigned, and that in proportion to the number and species. Regard certainly must be had of a person's condition, age, sex, and other circumstances. Do not be too strict. Never give a penance which you know is accepted only unwillingly, or which requires extraordinary humiliation and exertion, or which a person cannot fulfill without exposing himself to ridicule and suspicion. As a rule, do not impose a penance which lasts too long, say, whole weeks, or even months; such a penance is easily forgotten or neglected. The penitential works are reduced to three: prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. Prayer comprises not

only vocal orations, but also meditation, reception of the sacraments, hearing of Mass, visits made to the church for adoration, benediction, etc. Being the easiest, it also forms the most common kind of penance confessors are wont to give. "*Universae satisfactionis modum culpae ratio temperabit. Sed ex omnium satisfactionum genere maxime convenit poenitentibus praecipere, ut certis aliquot et definitis diebus orationi vacent ac pro omnibus et praesertim pro iis, qui ex hac vita in Domino decesserunt, preces Deo faciant.*" (Catech. Rom.). Fasting denotes all kinds of mortification, viz.: abstaining from meat and delicacies in eating, from certain luxuries, avoiding of parties and social gatherings otherwise lawful, bearing of daily humiliations, etc. It is a penance adapted especially to those who are given up to pride and lust. Alms-giving means all works of charity, viz.: supporting the poor by money, food, clothing, converting sinners, visiting and consoling the sick. Persons who are greatly absorbed by worldly matters, who cling too much to their wealth and earthly possessions, who have sinned against justice and the love due to their neighbor, may highly benefit by a penance of this kind. We would advise, however, always to have a short prayer added to it, in particular for the conversion of sinners and the poor souls in Purgatory.

### ARTICLE III.

#### CONFESSIONS OF PARTICULAR CLASSES OF PENITENTS.

##### A—CONFESSIONS OF CHILDREN.

117. In speaking about the confessions of children, we mean the confessions of those little ones who have not yet made their first Communion, viz., from the age of eight to twelve. Parents in this country, especially in districts where there is no Catholic or parochial school, frequently believe that their

children need not go to confession until they are old enough to be admitted to first Communion. This is a great error. First of all, children who have come to the use of reason are able to commit sin, and mortal sin, too. How shall these sins be forgiven except through the Sacrament of Penance? Again, there is an ecclesiastical precept binding all who have reached the age of discretion, to confess their sins at least once a year. Finally, we read in the Second Council of Baltimore (n. 442): "*Omnibus animarum curam gerentibus in Domino injungimus, ut saltem quater unoquoque anno et praesertim si fieri possit quatuor temporum feriis, pueros omnes spirituali ipsorum regimini commissos, qui nondum SS. Eucharistiae participes facti sunt, in unum colligant et per aliquot dies doctrinam christianam diligenter edoceant. Eos qui ad septennium pervenerint ad confessionem accedere curent.*" Considering all this, we must say that it is a great abuse to deprive children of the grace of sacramental absolution, to let them wait for it until they are twelve or fourteen years old. The conscience of both parents and pastors is charged with a mortal guilt by such grave omission and neglect. Children who attend a Catholic school offer no great difficulty in making them go to confession. It is somewhat harder with those who are sent to a public school, and who usually come to church for instruction only on Sundays. Still, they also must have a chance. The only way for the priest will be to appoint days on which a special course of preparation for confession shall be given, and again, days and hours for the actual hearing of such confessions.

118. It is no very easy task to hear the confessions of children. Sometimes they are not fully aware of the malice contained in sin, or they confess sins which they have not committed, simply because they find them mentioned in their prayer books and catechisms, or finally they accuse themselves of sins which, at the moment when they were committed, their conscience was not aware of



and which only afterwards they learned to be sins. Again, it is often rather hard to make these children feel truly sorry for their faults, most of them being but venial transgressions, or, if they have actually contracted a grievously bad habit, it may be difficult to discover the full nature and extent of it, because the little penitent speaks in vague terms, and you shrink from questioning him too much, lest he be scandalized. Shall we wonder that in consideration of all this many priests rather abhor these confessions? However, it is a burden which they must bear and which, if borne properly, shall not fail to have its merit in Heaven. Please note that these young souls are very tender and could be moulded in almost any way. Vice and sin have not gained much ground in them, and naturally can be extirpated with greater ease and quicker than is the case with grown people whose will has become too perverted.

119. In order to render the confessions fruitful, the young penitents must be instructed well beforehand. This instruction ought to be given by the priest himself, not by lay teachers or Sisters. The children should be made acquainted with the principal dogmas of faith, with the ten Commandments, the Commandments of the Church, and the doctrine of the Sacrament of Penance; they must know the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Acts of the three divine virtues, and the prayers which they have to say in the beginning and at the end of confession. They must be taught how to examine their conscience, sins, which, in their age, they are liable to commit, must be explained, and their deformity shown. Above all, their conscience must be aroused to a good contrition. Tell them what contrition is, not only in abstract words, but in a concrete form, viz.: by examples such as are furnished by the parable of the prodigal son or the lives of youthful saints, for instance, St. Aloysius, St. Stanislaus, and others. Let them understand why we ought to feel sorry for our sins; place before

their minds in full detail the various motives. They ought to know by heart the accurate formula of contrition, but remind them that the mere recitation of this formula is not sorrow; that sorrow and hatred of sin must have been awakened before, so that the act of contrition, contained in a standard formula, is simply an expression of what is felt in the heart. Also some other little remarks may not be out of place. Tell the children that they should prepare themselves well a couple of days previously; that when in church waiting for confession they ought not to talk, laugh, or pass any remark if one or the other stays too long in the confessional. Forbid them to ask each other what the priest told them, what penance he gave them, what he said on such and such a point. Impress the idea well on their minds that the confessional is a sacred place; that all which is spoken there is strictly private, intended only for the penitent, not for any outsider. Let them, above all, understand the necessity of confessing sincerely, and of never concealing a sin, of adding the number of sins in the best way possible, of listening well to the admonitions and of answering promptly the questions of the priest. After confession they must be made to remain a while (fifteen minutes) in church for thanksgiving. An instruction of this kind should always be given to children before their first confession, and it may be renewed afterwards at their second and third confession. The work to be done by the priest in the confessional will thus be simplified and greatly facilitated. But too many confessions are defective, because people in their youth or childhood had not learned how to confess; the want will be felt ever afterwards.

120. In the actual confession of children, a priest must use more than ordinary prudence and exhibit a great deal of patience and charity. Most of these penitents are quite shy and bashful at the first time. Therefore exhort

them in the sweetest way possible to go on, just as they have been instructed, to say the "Confiteor," and then their sins, one after the other, in the way they have examined themselves. It may be disputed whether it is advisable for children to write their sins. For our part, we must say that we are not in favor of this practice, or, if it be done the very first time, it should not be done afterwards, except, perhaps, at a general confession made before first Communion. Do not interrupt the penitent if he tells his sins not quite correctly, as to the number and circumstances. Such questions ought to be asked later, when he has said all which he intended to say. Almost every child must be questioned about sins against the Sixth Commandment. If you have instructed the children in their catechism class on this matter well, those whose conscience is guilty will likely tell all that burdens them, or at least make some allusion, so that you may see at once whether impurity has found entrance into their hearts or not. Frequently, however, they are entirely silent about it, partly through ignorance, shame, forgetfulness, partly because they are perfectly pure and innocent. To get a clear insight and to come to a settled conclusion, one or more questions ought to be asked, but very prudently and only from afar or indirectly as it were. If they always say no, and if the whole character, as appears from other sins confessed, does not furnish positive grounds for suspicion, you need not trouble yourself any longer. If, however, on the contrary, the child says yes, I have done this bad thing, which I knew to be a sin; if, by further investigation, you see that a habit has been contracted, that a proximate occasion exists, it becomes your duty to extirpate this poison of the hellish serpent by all means possible. Therefore, suggest the proper remedies, not only those of a general kind, but particular cures, too. Search into the internal or external cause of the evil. At home, in school, on the street, children may happen to see and hear things which are liable to corrupt their imagination and give

rise to lustful temptations, or, perhaps, there is a person, viz., brother, servant, school-mate, who is wont to seduce them directly. In this last case, as a rule, the only remedy is to report, to inform parents, teachers and others who, by their authority, will be able to put a stop to the mischief. Therefore, command the penitent to make such a report, or, if necessary, let him speak to you, the pastor, outside of the confessional on the matter, that you might help and use your influence in that line. On the whole, try to impress upon the minds of the little ones a holy fear of God's presence. Not only impurity, but also divers other faults and sins, frequently met with in children, may thus be suppressed and prevented from growing into bad habits. However, do not exaggerate things. Do not say, for instance, if you lie, you shall go to hell; but simply say, lying is bad, and in the same way with cursing, stealing, disobedience, etc.

121. A priest engaged in hearing the confessions of children ought to take special care of exciting them to a true contrition. Even if beforehand you have instructed the young pupils well on this point, do not be satisfied with simply asking them: Have you made an act of contrition? Perhaps it was done superficially without a firm resolution. Therefore, go into particulars; show them the special malice in certain kinds of sins, which they have accused themselves of, such as impurity, disobedience, want of respect for their parents, hatred, anger, etc.; lay before them special motives, why they should feel sorry for their sins, and why be careful of avoiding them in future. Thus their contrition will be what it ought to be, a real change of the heart. The penance must be always as light as possible. Of course, if really mortal sins have been committed, it ought to be in proportion, but never too hard. Do not tell them, for instance, to go to their parents and ask pardon for disrespect they have shown them, because they will not do it. Let them recite a litany,

a few Pater and Ave, etc. Never give them a penance which is to last a long time.

122. In regard to absolution we wish to say this much: If a child has been guilty of a mortal sin, absolution must be given every time and unconditionally. If only venial sins, but of some importance (lies, thefts, disrespect to parents), have been committed, absolution should be imparted again unconditionally. If things which seem rather to be childish faults than sins form the whole matter of the confession, it may be best to absolve conditionally (*si sis dispositus*), at least if the child appears to have some contrition, and if the whole character and age gives you a right to presume that perhaps mortal sins have occurred which have now been forgotten. But if all signs tend to show that the child does not yet know and realize what sin is, I would not absolve at all, only give a short exhortation and penance and dismiss the boy or girl with a blessing without telling them, that I did not absolve. When a priest hears confessions in a strange place, and children of very tender age come to him, he should ask whether they ever received any instruction or not; if not, he ought to dismiss and send them to the pastor to be instructed first.

#### B—CONFESSIONS OF WOMEN.

123. Company and intercourse between people of different sex is always liable to stimulate sensuality and to cause temptations of lust. Neither the confessor nor the female penitent can lay aside their nature and the instincts of flesh and blood. We need not wonder, therefore, if the Tribunal of Penance, though a source of grace and salvation by divine institution, becomes a snare of sin, an occasion of ruin and perdition through the malice and weakness of man. The very fact that the penitent reveals the deepest secrets of his heart, and that women are led mostly by their feelings, is tempting; it lures forth

from the breast of the priest a sentiment of sympathy which, if not kept within reasonable bounds, almost imperceptibly passes over into sensual attachment. Evidently, therefore, a priest, in hearing the confessions of women, must arm himself with prudence, circumspection, and zeal. “Non raro latet sub praetextu pietatis virus libidinis; experto crede: expertus loquor: vidi cedros Libani turpiter corruiſſe, de quorum ſanctitate non magis quam de Hieronymi virtute dubitaſſem.” (St. Augustine.)

124. Always take the penitent for what he actually is; namely, a poor sinner subject to faults and frailty. Some priests, misled by a sensual attachment, prefer to hear the confessions of females, especially of the so-called “devotulae,” rather than those of men, whilst it should be just the opposite. It may be harder and more laborious to listen to the sins confessed by men and to undertake their spiritual cure, but it is certainly more meritorious and more productive of fruit in the end. Virtue and piety found in men are, as a rule, more solid, more firm, and more lasting than is the case with women; nothing to say, that women often pretend to be pious and virtuous, whilst in reality they are not, deceiving themselves and their confessor. “Quanta miseria est,” says St. Alphonsus (Praxis conf. 120), “cernere confessarios qui multum tempus impendunt in audiendis devotis mulierculis, pauperes autem viros et uxores, qui sunt aerumnis afflicti, audire declinant. Hoc prefecto non est audire confessiones pro Deo sed pro genio suo. Quare nescio, quale meritum sperare possint confessarii illi, qui tali modo suum ministerium exercent.”

125. Always avoid familiarity, both internal and external, with female penitents. Hence suppress at once a feeling of attachment which creeps upon your heart. Do not trust yourself too much in this regard. The devil knows what he is after; he does not lay his snares openly, but secretly and from afar. “Diabolus,” says St. Alphonsus again, “non ab initio emittit sagittas venenatas, sed



illas tantummodo, quæ aliquantulum feriunt et augent affectum." Do not say to yourself that this attachment is altogether spiritual and based upon spiritual causes and prerogatives. "*Familiaritas spiritualis sensim atque sensim degenerat in familiaritatem sensualem et lasciviam;*" or, as Shakespeare ("*Measure for Measure*") puts it: "Ah, the cunning enemy to snatch a saint, with saints does bait his hook." Lest danger should rise from this source, a confessor, when dealing with a female penitent, must omit all acts which tend to foster personal predilection. Do not address the penitent in words that are too sweet and too soft. "*Patres sumus non matres.*" Whatever you have to say should be short, grave and to the point. Long conversations, extensive discussions even of spiritual subjects, both inside and outside of the confessional, are wrong. Answers to questions proposed must always be brief. "*Sermo brevis et rigidus cum his mulieribus habendus est, nec tamen quia sanctiores, ideo minus cavendae; quo enim sanctiores sunt, eo magis allaciunt.*" (St. Augustine.) Never fix your eyes upon women when they approach or leave the confessional, for this is very tempting. Do not address them by their proper names, Mary, Annie, etc.; never tell them anything which is liable to flatter their vanity, especially when they are young and gifted with bodily beauty or mental talent and genius.

126. If a female penitent should, directly or indirectly, show that she is attached to her confessor, she must be told, rudely and abruptly, never to come near him again, but to seek another confessor, if such be possible. Especially hysterical women and old maids sometimes allow themselves to be carried away by their feelings of admiration which they have for their confessor. They then become jealous of other women and express this jealousy by word and action. Always be on the lookout with these persons. They are liable to do a great deal of harm. They are not ashamed sometimes to tell lies in the

confessional or to put questions referring to imaginary dangers of their souls simply to lure forth from the heart of the priest sympathy and afterwards sensual love and carnal lust. "Cavendum est ab illis puellis, quae ex curiositate malitiosa cupiunt interrogari a confessariis, ut addiscant ea, quae adhuc ignorant; et in hunc finem semper affirmative respondent. Sunt etiam adhuc aliae magis malitiosae, quae sive ex libidine sive, ut postea in conversationibus rideant de confessario non solum ad quasdam interrogationes affirmative respondent, sed etiam ruborem fingunt et enixe petunt, ut interrogentur. Ab his scopulis interdum difficile est cavere, sed utile erit quod confessarii juniores sciant, quousque malitia feminea pertingere possit." (Berardi praxis, conf. n. 1099.)

127. Also the other extreme must be avoided. Let not your fear and caution degenerate into a hatred of women, just as if they were all full of perversity and each of them a devil in a female garb. No, there is certainly truth in the term adopted by the Church: "Devotus sexus femineus." The great bulk of Catholic women are virtuous, many really pious, or at least endeavoring to be so. The confessor should be to them a spiritual father and lead them on the right path. Women but too frequently are satisfied with the exterior, with the mere appearance of piety. Try to disabuse them of this false hallucination. Teach them that virtue and piety does not mean only to pray, to receive the Sacraments, to belong to half a dozen societies. Virtue, they ought to be told, consists in the love of God and of our neighbor, in charity, justice, obedience, meekness, humility, etc.; in the conquering of our passions, in the bearing of our crosses, in the fighting against the enemies of our salvation. "Fallax gratia et vana est pulchritudo, mulier timens Dominum, ipsa laudabitur" (Prov. 31). All should endeavor to fulfill the duties of their state and to give a good example to the members of their household. The wholesome influence

exercised by them in their home circle will not fail to bear its fruit in due time and season.

C—CONFESSIONS OF NUNS.

128. Nuns are persons of the female sex who have embraced the state of perfection, viz., the religious state. In order to devote themselves to the exclusive service of God they have bound themselves by the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They have left their homes, their families, their kindred, and by thus voluntarily cutting off the ties of flesh and blood, have made sacrifices of which only a truly Christian soul is capable. No matter what the single individuals are as to character, virtue, learning, etc., they deserve esteem and respect on account of their profession and the state which they belong to. No priest should overlook this and speak of nuns simply as troublesome creatures. Personally they may sometimes cause annoyance, but this is *per accidens*. On the whole, they are entitled to consideration, just as their calling requires. The great progress of Catholic missions made in all parts of the world within the last century is due, next to the apostolic labor of the clergy, not a little to the untiring efforts made by various religious communities of women. With extraordinary zeal and a truly sacrificing spirit these sisterhoods have devoted themselves to the education of youth, to the care of the sick, and other works of charity. Also in the United States they have contributed their share towards making the Church flourish and grow. Of this the Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore bear testimony in the following words: "Sanctimonialium sive feminarum religiosarum, hujus regionis praeclara in Christianam Rempublicam merita spectantes non possumus, quin agamus Omnipotenti Deo gratias; qui harum tam utilium congregationum tantum numerum tantamque varietatem in Ecclesiae subsidium excitaverit. Hisce quippe Congregationibus

acceptum referimus, quod tot puellarum innocentiae servandae habeamus parata tutaque domicilia; his debet America nostra institutionem numerosae juventutis tum in litteris tum in Christianis moribus atque adeo diffundendae Catholicae fidei efficax adjumentum. . . . Quis etiam acatholicus Sororum nostrarum in nosocomiis inexhaustam patientiam parem in omnes beneficentiam, singularem ubique modestiam potuit non admirari aut tantarum virtutum effectricem causam aliam cogitare, quam Divini Spiritus adjutorium illud, quo etiam inimicus homo cogatur fateri: *Digitus Dei est hoc*" (n. 415). Every priest who in his pastoral charge has to deal with sisters, should accept the helping hand they offer and be ready also on his part to make those sacrifices which are necessary for the spiritual welfare of these Spouses of Christ.

129. The canons of the Church ordain that no priest should hear the confessions of nuns who have made solemn vows, except he be specially authorized for that purpose. "*In generali facultate confessiones audiendi nunquam includitur facultas excipiendi monialium confessiones. Hinc, ad has audiendas sacerdotes etiam regulares, quicunque sunt, speciali indigent approbatione. Neque vero si quispiam certum ad monasterium sit destinatus, ut ibi ordinarii aut extraordinarii Confessarii munere fungatur, debet idcirco existimare approbatum se esse ad id munus in alio monasterio exercendum, nec approbatus pro una vice expleta deputatione confessiones monialium poterit excipere ulterius.*" (Zitelli, *Apparatus Juris ecclesiastici*.) There are but few, if any, sisterhoods in the United States with solemn vows; the vows of almost all of them are simple vows, though they may be perpetual ones. The law of the Church aforesaid, therefore, does not, as such, apply much to this country. However, bishops are exhorted by the Council of Baltimore to appoint special confessors, ordinaries and extraordinaries, also for nuns with simple vows, and they usually do this at least with

those who constitute a considerable community and who live in their own house, having their own chapel, in which the confessions are heard. No priest, therefore, should hear the confessions of these religious unless he be duly authorized. But an exception is to be made with those who, by a proper permission, are outside of their convents. They may confess to any priest having the ordinary jurisdiction. Likewise, if the community be small, as is usually the case with sisters teaching in a parochial school, and if for the sake of confession they go to the parish church, any priest to whom the faculties of the diocese have been granted may hear them. All this is evident from two decisions given by the Congr. Episc. et Reg: "*Aliquando moniales aut ratione sanitatis aut alia causa obtinent veniam egrediendi ad breve tempus ex earum monasterio, retento habitu, quaeritur an in tali casu possint exomologesim suam facere apud confessarios approbatos pro utroque sexus quamvis non approbatos pro nonialibus? Resp: Affirmative durante mora extra monasterium*" (Die 27 Aug., 1852). Later (22 April, 1872), a declaration was added that this decision applied to all classes of religious who had made simple vows. "*Item fuit definitum pro congregationibus sororum, quae vota simplicia emittunt nec clausurae legibus subjacent: Sorores de quibus agitur posse peragere extra piam propriam domum sacramentalem confessionem penes quemcunque confessarium ab ordinario approbatum.*"

130. A priest, that he may be able to hear the confessions of sisters, should be a man of experience, a man gifted with a thorough knowledge of ascetic theology. "*Sacrarum virginum confessionibus excipiendis eos tantum Episcopi praeferant, qui qua par est morum pravitatem prudentia doctrina et asceticae artis intelligentia praediti reperiantur.*" (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 417.) No one can lead others to perfection unless he be striving after perfection himself. Ignorance and imprudence on the part of the confessor may do immense

harm not only to the individual nun, but to the whole community of which she is a member. The confessor ought to foster in his penitent those virtues which her very profession, the religious state voluntarily chosen by her, demands, above all, humility, obedience, charity, patience. Obedience with religious must not be limited to strict commands, or to matters of importance; it ought to extend to everything, to the very minutest points and rules. It must be an obedience not only in the exterior, but also an obedience which comes from the heart: all mandates of the superioress should be executed with cheerfulness of mind and accuracy of performance. Charity and patience must be practised, especially in conversation and in dealing with the members of the community. Tell them to avoid all predilection and special friendships, because they will beget jealousy. Do not listen to complaints made against the local superioress. It is true the latter may sometimes fail in her duty, and, if so, the confessor must admonish her, but it should be done in a way to avoid suspicion that he has been asked by the other sisters, since otherwise it is liable only to pour oil into the fire. Let those who have grievances against the local ruler report to the general superioress or director, if there be one, that they may correct any abuse of authority. The confessor ought not to meddle with the temporal matters of the community either, least of all should he intrude himself, by means of the confessional, into the election of the superioress; he must leave this to the conscience of each penitent.

131. Bear in mind that nuns are also women. The religious garb which they wear does not divest them of their female nature and disposition. Hence, what we have said in the preceding number about women in general holds good with nuns, too. Also with them you must be on your guard against familiarity, especially when they are young. It is very improper to have amongst the sisters so-called pets, and to foster this wrong spirit by



detaining them longer in the confessional, by giving them lengthy and unnecessary instructions, by exchanging presents. Such action will create jealousy, talk, dissension, scandal. Peace and harmony, so essential to the religious life, will disappear. Outside of the confessional the priest should be friendly to all sisters, but intimate with none. Do not visit them too often or allow them to come to your house frequently. Whenever you call on them, observe sobriety in speech and action. It is highly improper for a priest to be with the sisters during their recreation hours, to play with them, to pass vulgar jokes in their presence, or take music lessons of them. This last thing, indeed, would be very dangerous and scandalous. Do not sit long in the parlor alone with any sister, superioress or not; always have witnesses present. Do not talk to them about matters concerning the spiritual or temporal government of the parish, just as if they were your consultants. Matters which regard the school may and must be discussed with sisters employed as teachers, but do not allow them to overstep the right limits. Insist upon strict obedience in the management of school affairs, likewise as to the keeping of the sacristy, singing in the choir, and in all things in which you make use of the sisters' service. Uphold your own authority in whatever comes under your pastoral care and rule. On the other hand, do not infringe on the rights of the sisters. They have their own regulations, and a local rector cannot dispense with them "ad nutum." Their hours of recreation, for instance, are limited, and as soon as they are over, silence must be observed by them. A priest should not attempt, therefore, to stay and engage them in unnecessary talk. Again, the number of their Holy Communions is fixed by their constitution. Do not make any changes on this point. Try to find out the regulations under which those nuns live whom you have to deal with, and see to it that they observe them well.

132. A confessor of nuns must endeavor to get the

full confidence of all his penitents. Paternal solicitude and true supernatural love of souls should, in a high degree, animate him who is the spiritual director of these spouses of Christ. Let him avoid all partiality; let him be prudent and meek. Severity will give rise to fear, and fear will debar the penitent from opening her conscience with candor and simplicity of mind. Do not require too much. Nuns are not saints, but feeble human creatures, subject to human faults, and liable to commit even mortal sins. If one, perchance, should accuse herself of a mortal sin, you must not be struck with horror, resort to sharp rebukes, or give her a dreadful scolding. It may lead to the worst results and be the cause of a long trail of sacrilegious confessions and communions. These poor nuns have no opportunity to pour out their soul to another priest besides their ordinary and extraordinary confessor. Hence, treat them always with the utmost kindness, lest they lose confidence in you.

133. Several abuses in the course of ages had crept in with female religious concerning the powers of the superioress in regulating the consciences of her subjects. To remedy this evil, His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII, through the Congreg. Episc. et Reg., has issued a special rescript ("Quemadmodum," Dec. 14, 1890). The principal points of this document are the following:

(a) All provisions made in constitutions and rules of religious orders or societies, by which an account of conscience or public manifestation of the inner heart is enjoined upon the subjects outside of the sacramental confession and the power to demand this account given to the superioress, are made null and void, and the superiors are ordered to expunge such provisions from the constitutions, manuals and rule books.

(b) No superioress henceforth is allowed to use any means in the shape of counsel, fear, threat, etc., to induce subjects to such manifestation of conscience. Subjects, to

whom the thing is hinted or on whom it is imposed, are commanded to report such action either to the general Superioress or to the Propaganda.

(c) This does not prohibit members to open their hearts on their own accord with full freedom to their superioress in doubts and anxieties of conscience.

(d) The superioress is bound to send for an extraordinary confessor if even one nun asks for it, without inquiring into the cause of such demand or without showing any sign of displeasure.

(e) To grant or to prevent from Holy Communion is the exclusive right of the ordinary or extraordinary confessor. Only if a member has committed an external fault of a serious nature or has given a public scandal to the community, the superioress may detain her from Holy Communion, until she has first gone to confession.

(f) Whenever a nun has obtained the privilege of a Holy Communion on a day not set apart for the whole community, she must inform the superioress, who, if she has reason to object, may speak to the confessor, but the latter's decision must be abided by.

(g) Copies of this papal document in the vernacular must be inserted into each constitution and be read once a year to the whole community.

134. Persons that have espoused the religious state ought to love solitude and retirement. Their dealings with the outside world ought to be regulated by prudence and charity, and not extend any further than necessity requires. Pastors and confessors should attend to this point and report all abuses to the proper authorities. It is certainly wrong to have sisters, either singly or in pairs, absent on a collection tour for several days and weeks in places distant from their own convents or other religious houses. "*Demum quum omnino deceat, ut Moniales sint vel non sint claustratae in conventibus suis quantum fieri possit permaneant atque in sancta solitudine spiritualibus exercitiis et operibus pietatis et charitatis*

secundum earum institutum sese devoveant, prorsus reprobamus morem illum seu verius abusum, qui nuper invectus est juxta quem nunnulae ex istis piis feminis huc illuc circumcursant et saepe ad loca ab earum monasteriis remota divertunt causa pecuniae colligendae pro novis domibus fundandis vel ab aere alieno iis quae jam sunt fundatae liberandis." (Conc. Baltim. II., 422.) Sisters coming from a strange place and diocese, going around begging, ought to be examined by the local pastor as to their papers. Besides the credentials of their own superiors, they must have a permit of the Ordinary in whose diocese they intend to collect. (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., n. 95.) Furthermore, certain precautions must be observed. "Ordinarios hortamur ut id non permittant, sine necessariis et prudentibus precautionibus, uti sunt praesertim, ne unquam solae nec juniores nec post solis occasum elemosynas colligere permittantur et ita ut ubi fieri potest in domo sororum suae vel alterius congregationis pernocent" (e. l.). Do not allow, either, your own school sisters things which are not in conformity with their calling, which are liable to lead to dissipation and distraction. Prevent them from going about the whole parish under the pretext of looking after their pupils, if they should have this custom. Do not permit them to receive too many lay visitors or to talk and chat too much with seculars in and around their house and yard. Should a sister in confession accuse herself of great dissipation of mind, caused by excessive contact with the world, then command her by all means to put a stop to it, otherwise she will be in great danger of losing her vocation and of giving public scandal sooner or later.

#### D—CONFESSIONS OF PIOUS PENITENTS.

135. The Sacred Tribunal of Penance, though originally and primarily intended as a means of reconciliation, as a way to regain the happy state of grace lost

through mortal sin, may also be made the instrument of arriving at higher perfection. This is the reason why not only penitents, whose conscience is loaded with grievous guilt, and who are spiritually dead, present themselves in the confessional, but also those who, on the battlefield of the soul, in the great fight between virtue and vice, have received but slight wounds. The words of God's minister pronounced in absolution will not fail to heal these small defects and trifling sores any less than the big, deadly gashes caused through mortal sin. Pious persons, wishing to keep themselves as much as possible aloof from the dust of malice and corruption otherwise inherent to human nature, ought to be encouraged to come to confession frequently, viz., at least once a week. "*Personis devotioni deditis, quae frequenter accedant ad communionem, ordinarie loquendo insinuandum, ut saltem in qualibet hebdomada sacramentalem absolutionem suscipiant.*" (St. Alph. praxis confess, c. 7, n. 99.) It becomes the duty of the confessor, when he meets with this sort of penitents, to do his very best towards directing them, because they need a guide, lest by being left to themselves the vessel of their soul strikes upon rocks and shoals, where it will rapidly sink and perish. "*Ecce te constitui super gentes ut evellas et dissipes ut aedifices et plantes.*" These words of God, spoken to the prophet Jeremias, may in truth be applied to every priest whom a devout soul has chosen for his spiritual father and director. "*Acceptor est Dei oculis anima sola perfecta quam mille imperfectae. Unde quum videt confessarius poenitentem vivere immunem ■ culpis mortalibus omnem curam adhibere debet, ut eum in viam perfectionis et divini amoris introducat, illi representando meritum, quod habet Deus, ut ametur et gratitudinem, quam debemus Jesu Christo, qui nos amavit usque ad moriendum pro nobis, necnon periculum, in quo versantur omnes animae, quae vocatae ad vitam perfectionem illi resistunt.*" (S. Alph. Praxis conf., c. 9, n. 121.)

136. It is important to form a correct judgment from

the very beginning. Do not be deceived! Not all who pretend to be pious actually are pious. Piety does not consist in external works only, but principally in the interior disposition of the soul, by which a man is willing to serve God with his whole heart and to make a perfect oblation of himself to his Lord and Creator. The first thing required is a deadly horror of mortal sin, so much, indeed, that one shudders at the very thought of it. Just to avoid mortal sin, a really devout soul must be on its guard against venial offenses, at least against those that are committed with full deliberation. "*Itaque venialia quae crebro acciderunt haud facile transmitti debent, cum juxta Augustini sententiam nihil intersit ad naufragium utrum uno grandi fluctu navis obruatur an paulatim et per guttas instillans aqua in sentinam et per negligentiam relicta navem tandem impleat et submergat. Sic ad animae periculum nihil refert utrum uno grandi peccato, an levioribus multis anima sauciata moriatur.*" (Instr. Eystett.) However, the avoiding of sin is only a negative feature; it simply removes the obstacle in the way of perfection. Perfection itself goes further. The confessor ought not to think that he has done his duty by making his penitent shun sin; he ought to lead and direct him in the exercise of virtue.

137. Christian virtue, though essentially the same, differs as to the particular actions, occasions and persons, by which it may be practised. The obedience of a child to its parents, of a wife to her husband, of a servant to his master, of a religious to his superior, have a different coloring. Always take regard of this and lead your penitents according to the external position in which Providence has placed them. Let them understand that above all they must fulfill well the obligations their state of life demands of them, because thus they do the Will of God, and this is piety. They should never go to church, betake themselves to prayer, practice mortifications of their own choice, if by so doing the duties which they have



at home or elsewhere are neglected. Let the penitent not aspire too high at once, let him go on gradually and see that the ordinary actions be performed with a proper attention and with true simplicity and humility. "Confessarius attendat, ut ad perfectionem ducat ordinate et gradatim, prius docendo, levia patienter ferre, quam gravia appetere, prius pati aequo animo adversa quam de adversis gaudere, prius pura intentione omnia operari et imitari actionem Christi, quam alta meditari, prius sua quotidiana officia bene peragere quam extraordinariis se dedere devotionibus. Feminis junioribus nunquam concedat, ut vagentur per ecclesias dissitas aut in ecclesia justo longius morentur, sed moneat eos, ut domesticos potius labores recte amplectantur et omnia faciant, quia quomodo et quando ea Deus fieri vult: divina enim voluntas omnis perfectionis fons est et norma." (Inst. Eystett.)

138. The ordinary means of sanctification, such as prayer, the reception of the Sacraments, the Holy Sacrifice, must certainly be made use of. However, tell the penitent not to be satisfied with the external performance; instruct him as to the way and manner in which we ought to avail ourselves of these means, how and why we must procure the right disposition in ourselves. Educated persons ought to be induced to practice mental prayer, to read a spiritual book every day, to meditate frequently on the life and passion of our Lord. Persons of ordinary intelligence, who cannot read well, may be taught such devotions in which their minds shall find a source of new light and grace, viz., the mysteries of the Rosary, short invocations and aspirations. All should be admonished to bear their crosses well, to walk in God's presence, to examine their consciences every day, particularly as to their predominant passion, to exercise themselves continually in works of charity, and give a good example to those whom they come into contact with. Always show the greatest sympathy to people who complain about spiritual aridity and want of fervor in their devotions. Tell them not to

quit them, as God does not look at the elasticity of mind or sweetness of sentiment, with which these devotional exercises are executed, but at the good will of ours which is at the bottom of them. The greatest temptations which they experience should not deter them, because temptation is no sin; it is a means in the hands of God to strengthen our virtue.

139. Not all who begin well persevere, but many gradually fall back. They first exhibit a sort of carelessness, which grows into tepidity, and finally ends with mortal sin. The confessor will discover it pretty soon in the want of candor which they used to show in their confessions. When they commence to relax, at once give the alarm in a loving but resolute way. Tell them there is no escape, that the enemy is in close pursuit, and that he will surely catch them in his snares if they do not retrace their steps and, without delay, resume their old and usual fervor. Cases of this sort are not rare and may be a vexatious disappointment to the confessor. Shall we give an instance? Take a boy or girl who have been brought up in full innocence by their pious parents. With great ardor and love they have made their first Communion, and this holy disposition of theirs continued for several years, giving a fair promise as to the future. All of a sudden a change comes like a blighting cold blast, or, to adopt the words of Cardinal Manning, as a tree breaks asunder and shows decay at the heart, they fall; little by little the leaves grow pale and droop, and a sickliness, which none can understand, overspreads the tree. Some secret temptation, some perilous allurements, some unchastened intimacy, some clouding of the conscience, some relaxation of rule, some neglect of self-examination, some omissions of prayer, some fatal opportunity, when conscience is silenced and the will is weak and the temptation strong, then comes the first fall; after which to fall again and again is easy. The gulf is past and they enter upon an unknown world, "*ubi nullus ordo, et umbra mortis.*" As

soon as you notice the change, stay the torrent which is coming along to bring down ruin and disaster. "Obsecra, increpa, importune, opportune." Warn, instruct, pray for the poor soul; make a novena for her; let others pray and use their good influence to prevent the final ruin.

140. Do not lose courage if penitents, seemingly striving with an earnest zeal after perfection, do not at once make such rapid progress as you wish. Lead them gradually. Do not ask too much at the same time. Bear in mind that human nature is weak, and that, like in war, victory is not met with continually, but defeat will occur, too. Cardinal Manning strikes the right note when he says: "Besides the sins of bad men, a priest has to suffer by the lukewarmness of good men. That people should be so good and yet not better; that they should be so full of light and fall so short of it; that they should do so many good acts and yet not do more; that they should have so few faults, but so few excellences; that they should be so blameless, yet deserve so little praise; so full of good feeling, but so spare in good works; so ready to give, but so narrow in their gifts; so regular in devotions, yet so little devout; so pious, yet so worldly; so ready to praise the good works of others, and yet so hard to move to do the like; so full of censures of the inertness and inconsistency, omissions, faults, and lukewarmness of other men, and yet so unhelpful and soft and unenergetic and lukewarm themselves—all these are spiritual paradoxes and contradictions which vex and harass a priest with perpetual disappointment." (Manning, "Eternal Priesthood," c. xi., n. 3.)

141. Absolve the penitents when they come for their weekly confession, even if you notice no progress. Their will may, nevertheless, be strong and they may be fully disposed and ready to avoid in future the venial sins they accuse themselves of, at least one or the other. The best way, however, to secure the validity of the Sacrament is to make them include a more serious fault of their past life; but instruct them that they must have a new and true

contrition for this fault, and that it must not be simply a routine accusation, which makes them forget to feel sorry over their present sins and to amend their present life.

E—CONFESSIONS OF SCRUPULOUS PENITENTS.

142. St. Paul, in one of his epistles (Philipp. ii, 2), says: "My dearly beloved, with fear and trembling work out your salvation." These apostolic words, inspired by the Holy Ghost, are apt to make us alert in the service of God, lest we should be found wanting at the time of judgment. However, the fear thus stirred in our hearts must be a holy fear; it must be reasonable and not impede love, which should ever be the leading element in a Christian's life. But there are people who, through excessive anxiety lest they offend God, get extravagant, become absorbed in vain ideas or false apprehensions, and miss the road of virtue and perfection. They fear to commit sin by every thought and action of theirs and in things which no sensible person would ever consider wrong. These are called scrupulous. A scruple is not a passing doubt founded upon reason, but an idle phantom of the mind and foolish hallucination. "The scrupulous person," says Scaramelli (*Directorium asceticum*), "is like a horse that shies, rears, goes backward, and that no longer will obey the bridle or spurs of its rider, on seeing the shadow of a tree, as though it saw a lion or a tiger in front waiting to tear it to pieces; thus, by the groundless fear of danger, which does not exist, putting both itself and its rider in the real danger of a fatal fall." Scruples are always evil, and, when carried on for a long while and with great intensity, may lead to the worst results. They render a person indisposed for prayer and thus cut off the very root and source from which grace flows upon us. When the scrupulous go to confession or intend to receive Holy Communion, their hearts are troubled and disquieted. The poor wretches either lose all hope and give themselves up to despair, or their hope becomes so dim as not to be any

longer a stirring power encouraging them to hold out in the midst of trials and temptations. "They that trust in the Lord," says the Prophet, "shall gather new strength; they shall walk, run, even fly like an eagle." Take away hope and the anchor is gone, so that the poor soul is lost like a bark on a tempestuous sea. Peace and equilibrium of mind being destroyed, a person suffering hard by scruples becomes unfit for the discharge of his duties. The constant strain wrought upon the mind weakens the constitution of the body and upsets even the mental and intellectual faculties so that utter insanity may be the end. With others scrupulosity leads to the opposite extreme. Finding the burden, under which they labor and sigh, too hard, they shake off the yoke of God's law altogether, and become lax and frivolous. In consideration of such facts, it is evident why and how a confessor, who has to deal with scrupulous penitents, may feel much embarrassed and distressed. Still, there is no escape; you must bear this cross. "The care of scrupulous people," says Scaramelli again, "is one of the most worrying and arduous tasks that can fall to the lot of a physician of souls. It is worrying, for, as these poor creatures are ever tormenting themselves with the self same scruples, they fail not to torment their confessor with never-ending repetitions. It is arduous, because it makes the largest claims on the charity, patience, prudence, good sense, and power of guidance of spiritual directors."

143. Scruples may originate from divers sources. One cause is to be found in a special act of divine Providence. God allows a soul to be tried by scruples to cleanse it of past faults, to ground it in a just fear of real sins, to humble it by forcing it to have a low opinion of itself, to give to it an occasion of practicing obedience, patience, and self-abnegation. The tokens by which we may be able to discern whether scruples come from a special permission of God for our purification, are found in the good results which in that case they produce. If a man, despite

the inward agitation and constant harrassing he undergoes, yet makes real progress in virtue, if his hatred of sin becomes more intense, if he gets more steady in prayer and pious exercises, the confessor may rest assured that God has His special design in the affair. Usually scruples of this kind do not last long, because "God will not suffer the just to be forever moved." (Ps. 54, 23.) The storm ceases as soon as the effect has been obtained, after the spiritual atmosphere has been cleansed from all bad and noxious miasms. A second cause of scruples lies in the wicked machinations of the devil. The great enemy of mankind may fill our imagination with vain fancies, instill gloomy apprehensions of sin into our intellect, and overcloud the whole mind with spiritual darkness; he may also stir up humors in the sensitive appetite apt to produce anguish, bitterness, and turmoil. The end which the demon has in view is to create a disgust for God's holy law and exercise of virtue, to render prayer and devotion irksome, that thus we may be thrown into despair and cast everything overboard. To trace scruples to this cause we need but look at the effects. If a person experiences a kind of peculiar melancholy and bitterness, if he feels exhausted under the yoke of his tribulation, if he is much tempted by lustful thoughts and desires, if he becomes neglectful in his spiritual exercises, it may be taken for granted that the devil is at the bottom of the trouble. A third cause from which scruples spring is a man's natural disposition and character, which again may have its root in his bodily constitution. Some persons are naturally timid and cowardly; they feel alarmed at the mere apprehension of danger; they become nervous and excited if they notice things which are somewhat out of the ordinary routine; they are inclined to bad suspicion; they have no confidence either in themselves or others; they trouble themselves greatly about imaginary evils. It is evident that such a character is a fertile soil for scruples. Some, indeed, become so much absorbed in them that it sets them



crazy, or at least makes them act in a manner so strange as to create a sort of partial derangement of mind.

144. The confessor, in meeting a person who appears to be scrupulous, should first examine the case closely. A passing doubt is not yet a scruple, even if at times this should happen frequently. Neither could you call somebody scrupulous who, having sinned much in days gone by, is a little alarmed as to his former confessions. Therefore, do not hinder him from confessing his past sins more accurately, or telling circumstances which he had forgotten, or from penitential works which, in expiation for his crimes and faults, he begs permission to perform. Symptoms of real scrupulosity are a groundless fear of offending God at every moment and through almost every action, a fear not built upon reason, but caused by a vague feeling; a frequent change of opinion; a constant agitation and distress, an excessive anxiety and doubt as to certain particulars, viz., the intention in pious and holy acts, devotion in prayer, sorrow in contrition, a never-ending perplexity; a desire of confessing sins again and again, which have been duly confessed already; an obstinacy of opinion even against the advice and commands of a prudent confessor. As soon as you have come to the conclusion that the penitent is really scrupulous, you must investigate the cause and shape your remedies accordingly. Usually several causes will combine, and therefore it may be good to apply now one, now another remedy. The principal means to effect a cure is blind obedience to the confessor and spiritual Director. All theologians agree on this point. The trouble, however, is that many scrupulous persons withdraw themselves from this yoke of holy obedience. They say that the confessor did not understand them correctly, or that their confessor is too lax, etc. To these you may answer: No one can be a fair judge in his own case, much less if he is tormented by vain illusions; to believe ourselves rather than those whom God has placed over us is an unbearable pride, which deserves the severest

censure. If this does not quiet the penitent, then either send him away and say that you cannot help him, or at least treat him with the utmost rigor. “Curet in hoc confessarius, ut poenitens exacte obediat, et si non obedit, eum increpet, privet communione et rigorose coerceat. Scrupulosi ordinarie cum dulcedine tractandi sunt, sed circa obedientiam magnus rigor ipsis est adhibendus; si enim hanc obedientiae anchoram amittunt, certum incurrunt naufragium, nam aut amentes evadent aut habenas in vitia relaxabunt.” (St. Alph. Praxis conf. c. 7, n. 97.)

145. The confessor, in giving his commands, must be decided in his tone and not show any sign of doubt or perplexity, because his example would just confirm the penitent in his false alarms. Tell these afflicted souls that they ought not omit praying, even if they find no relish in it, command them to despise their scruples, and to act against a momentary doubt, even if their conscience be not quiet afterwards. Forbid them to reflect about their scruples, to talk to others on the matter, to consult books in this regard. Assign to them the day and time when they may come to confession; never hear them at other times, even if they say they have committed a mortal sin; be firm and make no exception. In confession itself never allow them to mention their scruples; past sins they must not be permitted to repeat, except they could swear that the sin has never been confessed before. On the whole, always foster hope in these unfortunate people. Make them consider God as a merciful Father and not as a stern Judge. If scruples have their seat in the corporal constitution and natural temperament, it may be good also to consult a skillful and conscientious physician, at least if they are very bad and begin to affect considerably the brain and the whole body.

146. Sometimes you meet with penitents who are scrupulous only in certain matters of minor importance, whilst in matters of importance they appear rather to be very lax. Thus you may come across persons who are

anxious in watching the words and actions of their neighbors, believing it to be their duty to correct them at once, whilst they make little account of sins of pride, impure thoughts, desires, etc., which they themselves are subject to. Such people are in a dangerous condition. Do not treat them as the average class of scrupulous persons. They are regular Pharisees, and you must be very cautious in directing them. Tell them that it would be much better for their spiritual welfare to despise the little scruples they have concerning others, and give their full attention to the evil habits, crimes, and sins of their own, in regard to which they seem to have a rather lax conscience.

#### F—CONFESSIONS OF HABITUAL AND RELAPSING SINNERS.

147. *Note*—A sinner may be called relapsing without being habitual, yet in most cases the cause of the relapse lies in the bad habit, and therefore it may be just as good to speak here on both classes at the same time and under the same head.

Habitual sinners are those who, by repeated acts of the same sin, have become accustomed to it, so as to commit this sin frequently, with facility and without much resistance. “*Consuetudinarius dicitur ille qui ex frequentia in certo genere peccatorum, habitum seu pravam inclinationem eorumdem peccatorum committendorum contrahit.*” (Sabetti, Theol. mor.) It is hard to tell how often a man must be wont to commit a sin so as to deserve the name of a habitual delinquent. A line, however, should be drawn between internal sins, viz., sins of thought and desire, and sins committed by external action; again, between sins committed with ourselves, and sins committed with an accomplice. The more easily a sin by its very nature tempts man, the greater ought to be the number required in constituting a habit. “*Quo facilius aliquod peccatum committi soleat, eo plures actus intra certum tempus requiruntur.* Porro facilius committuntur pec-

cata cordis et oris quam operis, facilius opera non consummata quam consummata. Inter opera consummata, facilius committuntur ea quae solitarie, quam ea quae cum alio patrantur. De caetero certus numerus prudenti arbitrio aestimandus est. Hinc S. Alphonsus ait: 'Quinque vices in mense jam possunt malum habitum constituere in aliquo vitio peccati externi, modo inter ipsas aliquod intervallum intercedat.' In peccatis autem luxuriae consummatae quae complicem habent, multo minor numerus habitum constituere potest; sic v. g. qui per integrum annum semel in mense fornicaretur, bene habituatus dici posset. In peccatis demum cordis et oris multo major numerus requiritur, ut habitus adesse censeatur, e. g. ut quis bis terve in hebdomada peccet." (Hilarius a Sexten, *Tractatus pastoralis de Sacramentis*.) To relapse means simply to fall back into a sin which we have confessed before, and which we were determined not to commit any more. This may be the case even with such sins to which we have not become habitually addicted. Moralists make a distinction between "relapsi formales" and "relapsi materiales." The first kind are those who have relapsed into the same sin without making any effort to avoid it; the latter class are those who, though they fell again, did so with greater reluctance, who have not sinned as often as before, and who show at least some amendment.

148. Habitual sinners are like persons suffering from a serious and fatal disease, which disease has weakened the whole system to such an extent as to bring a man near death, and to require a more than ordinary skill on the part of the physician if an effective cure shall be obtained. The evil habit has become a second nature as it were. The unfortunate victim is so much entangled in the meshes of his passion and held down by the bondage of the demon as to lose almost all his will-power. Not at once, but only gradually he may hope to be healed of his spiritual malady. A confessor ought to keep this in view and always treat the penitent with clemency, without becoming

lax and over-indulgent. As far as the absolution is concerned, we believe with St. Alphonsus, that whenever the cause of the habit and relapse lies in intrinsic weakness, the penitent ought to be absolved, provided he be earnestly determined, "*hic et nunc*," to break his fetters which hold his soul down in captivity, and to avoid sin in future. "*Ut meum hic proferam iudicium, dico quod si poenitens relapsus sit ob causam seu fragilitatem intrinsecam, ut accidit in peccatis pollutionis, delectationis morosae, odii, blasphemiae et similium, raro puto differendam esse absolutionem recidivo sufficienter disposito per signum extraordinarium.*" (St. Alph., I. 6, n. 463.) Of course, the sole promise to amend one's life is not sufficient, as but too often this promise is a mere "*verbum oris*," and not a "*verbum cordis*." The practical way to proceed, we deem, is this: Ask the penitent who comes to you the first time how long the bad habit has been in existence, whether a former confessor had called his attention to it and had suggested particular means to remedy it, whether he has applied these means, how and why he fell back into the old sin, how soon after confession the relapse occurred. The answer which the penitent gives to these questions will at once throw a light upon his whole character and condition, and help you in forming your judgment as to whether he is worthy of absolution or not. Arouse his conscience with all the force of speech and the unction of spirit you have, show him the terrible danger in which his soul is found, fill his heart with a wholesome fear and make him feel truly sorry for his sins, but encourage him also and tell him that there is hope of recovery, provided that he will work for his salvation with the full energy of his will. Offer your help to him and point out the time when he must come to confession again, but absolve him as long as he is really disposed and earnestly promises to do his very best in future. If, when he returns, he says: "Father, I had the misfortune to fall again into my old sins," inquire whether he had followed your advice;

whether he had employed the means of amendment suggested and thus made some efforts to avoid the sins which he used to commit in the past; or whether he neglected the matter altogether. In the first case he would be a "recidivus materialis," and therefore worthy of absolution; in the last case he would be a "recidivus formalis," and could not be absolved unless some extraordinary sign should occur. A prudent confessor will hardly fail to lure forth a sign of this kind. It may help, for instance, to tell the penitent first to go and say some prayers, viz., the litany, the Rosary, that God may enlighten him, and then return to confession about fifteen minutes or half an hour later. If he does so, then at his return suggest some stronger remedies, open his eyes that he may see more clearly the danger his soul is exposed to: very likely thus his heart will be filled with greater and deeper compunction, so that he could be absolved. Should the disposition remain doubtful, you must weigh all circumstances and see whether it will benefit the penitent to postpone his absolution for a week or longer. If there be sufficient reason to fear that he will never return, that he will be alienated from religion and faith altogether, absolve him conditionally, viz., "*si es dispositus.*"

149. Being the spiritual Father of these unhappy sinners, often recommend them to God in your prayers and make a memento for them during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The conversion of a sinner is the work of the Holy Ghost and his grace, men cannot be but instrumental. Tedious and hard as the work is which you perform, you ought to bear in mind that only one soul snatched from hell is worth all the labor you bestow upon it. "*Caeterum repeto,*" writes St. Alphonsus, "*quisque se dirigere debet juxta lumen quo donatur a Deo. Concludo hic et dico: Non nego quod aliquando bene prodesse possit recidivo disposito dilatio absolutionis. Dico secundo: Semper proderit quod confessarius hujusmodi recidivos terreat ostendatque, ac si non posset eos absol-*



vere. Dico tertio: Ordinarie loquendo recidivis ex fragilitate intrinseca et per signum extraordinarium jam dispositis magis absolutionis beneficium proderit quam dilatio. Utinam et confessarii recidivos absolverent tum solum cum signa extraordinaria afferunt. Id quod lugendum est, quod major, nedum dicam maxima confessoriorum pars universaliter recidivos absolvunt sine distinctione sine signo extraordinario, sine admonitione et sine aliquo saltem remedio praestito ad emendationem: et hinc vere procedit non jam ab absolvendis dispositis tot animarum universalis perniciēs." (Praxis confess., c. 5, n. 77.)

G—CONFESSIONS OF PENITENTS LIVING IN  
PROXIMATE OCCASIONS.

150. An occasion of sin means any external circumstance or object offering a temptation and enticing us more or less to offend God. Without entering into deep arguments and an extensive discussion of this subject, as may be found in books of moral, we shall simply state the principles and illustrate by a few examples and cases of more frequent occurrence the mode according to which these principles ought to be applied. A distinction must be made between remote and proximate occasion. The first one is an occasion in which, as a rule, we feel only tempted, without yielding to the temptation; the latter is an occasion in which usually ("communiter et plurimum," says St. Alphonsus), we fall and commit sin. This proximate occasion may be voluntary or necessary. It is voluntary if we could avoid it with a sufficient energy of will; it is necessary if it is not in our power to remove it, if too much either physical or moral difficulty is in the way. Finally, an occasion may be continuous so as to tempt us the whole time (in esse), or not continuous so as to offer a temptation only at certain moments, viz., when we go in search of it, or, at least, do not positively avoid it. Sinners exposed to occasions often are the cause of great trouble

and perplexity to their confessor. The occasions vary as much as the individual penitents. An occasion which is proximate for one may be only remote for another. With prudence and practical sagacity you must weigh all the circumstances and then choose that mode of acting which, in consideration of particular facts, seems to be the best. Often you will feel yourself placed between two extreme alternatives, namely, either to dismiss the penitent without absolution and thus to run the risk of driving him altogether from the Church and Sacraments, or to absolve him and thus foster a laxity of morals. In emergencies of this kind always hold to the principles; examine under what head the case may be comprised, and then come to an immediate conclusion. The whole disposition of the penitent will help much to determine the mode to be adopted. A confessor may fail once in a while, but if he has done what at the moment appeared as proper to him, God will pardon his error and not hold him responsible for the consequences.

151. The principles to be followed may be summed up thus: A person who voluntarily exposes himself to a proximate occasion of mortal sin cannot be absolved unless he be ready to avoid such an occasion in future. Should the occasion be continuous (in esse), then, as a rule, he must first actually remove it before absolution. "*Talis poenitens*," says St. Alphonsus (*Prax. conf.*, c. 4, n. 66), "*non est dispositus ad absolutionem si petat eam, antequam occasionem removeat; etenim eam recipiendo se immittit in proximum periculum frangendi propositum et sic remanendi in eadem occasione.*" An exception could be made only in very extraordinary cases, for instance, with those who are in danger of death, or with such as could not return to confession till after a long time. If the occasion is not continuous, you may absolve the penitent upon the sincere promise made by him that he will not expose himself any longer to the danger. If, however, he should have broken his promise two or three times in

succession, you must first give him a trial. A proximate occasion which is necessary, that a person is not able to abandon except with great external difficulty, cannot, as such, be made the cause for refusing absolution. But the penitent is bound, *sub gravi*, to use particular means by which the proximate occasion might be rendered remote, and the confessor ought to suggest such means. "Si occasio non posset auferri sine scandalo aut gravi damno vitae, famae aut bonorum, eo casu poenitens bene absolvi potest, quin occasionem auferat, quia tunc non tenetur eam remove, modo promittat exequi media necessaria ad efficiendum, ut occasio ex proxima evadat remota. Non dicit Scriptura quod peribit, qui est in periculo, sed qui amat periculum; sed nequit dici amare periculum, qui illi invitus subjacet." (St. Alph. Praxis, conf., c. 4, n. 68.)

152. Of the divers occasions of sin a few deserve special mention. Persons working in factories and shops are often exposed to temptations which endanger both the virtue of faith and the virtue of purity. Sometimes they meet with men who make it their regular business to seduce their co-laborers by word and action. They are wont to ridicule religion, to scoff at priests and their sacred functions, to tell all kinds of lies, old and new, against the Catholic Church; others, whose hearts and minds are filled with impurity, relish immodest talk and carry on conversations on nasty subjects. It may take more than ordinary courage for a young man to resist the temptations thus offered. The horror he felt in the beginning gradually disappears, his faith and virtue first become weakened and finally they are lost. The confessor should closely question this penitent, when he approaches the Sacred Tribunal, that he may ascertain whether there is a real necessity to remain in this occasion, and, if so, by what means temptation could be removed or at least be lessened with a hope of avoiding sin. Tell the penitent to ask the chief manager or foreman of the department to give him a job where the seducer could not have access to

him. Remind him of the duty he has of praying more earnestly and assiduously, that he may have sufficient strength to resist the evil influences which he is exposed to; invite him to receive the Sacraments frequently; let him understand that we must fight for a good cause with zeal and perseverance, that we must exhibit a sort of manly courage in this regard and not be cowards.

153. A snare for our young men and a fertile occasion of sin we also behold in the houses of ill-fame or prostitution. The large cities are filled with them, and even in the smaller towns you may be able to find one or the other. Their number is constantly increasing, partly through the fault of the municipal authorities, who are too easy in granting licenses, but mostly on account of the great corruption of the age. Devoid of all religion, of all moral education, as the young have been brought up during the latter half of this century in the godless modern school, they cannot but fall victims to vice and the lusts of the flesh. About the poor female inmates of these dens of crime we need not say much here, for they, having abandoned everything that ought to be dear to a woman's heart, never come to confession, except, perhaps, at the moment of death. But what about men who accuse themselves of having visited these abodes of moral pestilence? At first when you meet with such a case you may feel shocked, and impelled to load a shower of vituperation on the penitent because he was not ashamed to take part in such filthy abominations. However, hold your temper; think of Mary Magdalene or the woman caught in adultery, who were both treated with the utmost mercy and kindness by the God-man Christ, and thus saved from fatal ruin. Do you also the work of the Samaritan and try to heal the poor sinner from his spiritual malady. Search into the cause. Some believe that their criminal practice was not so very bad, only a human or natural weakness; disabuse them of this false opinion and let them have a clear understanding of the wickedness that is in

the matter. Make them promise that under no condition they will ever go near such a place again. Furthermore, command them to shun the company of each and every one who is liable to coax them thither. When such a promise has been given sincerely and without restriction, absolution cannot be withheld very well. However, tell the penitent at once when he ought to come to confession again; the day set apart for it must not be too far off, not longer than a month. Instruct him, also, that if he cannot return to you, he may confess to another priest, but that he must inform this confessor about what you have told him, if ever he should have the misfortune to fall back into his old disorders. As long as there is some hope of rescuing the unfortunate sinner, it is best to be patient and lenient, though, on the whole, the penitent must be treated as a person who is in an occasion "non in esse." We wish to add that it is the duty of pastors in country missions to give a timely and private warning to young folks of either sex who leave their home to seek for work in cities and larger towns. These innocent boys and girls from rural districts are the very ones whom the owners of bad houses seek; inexperienced as they are, they but too readily listen to the pecuniary offerings made to them until it is too late.

154. Intercourse between young people of different sex, vulgo company keeping is another occasion fraught with sin. The confessor should ask these penitents first what object they have in such visits paid to each other. If they say, it is only for fun, for a pastime, then there is no other alternative except to cut off such love parties at once or else to be dismissed without absolution. If a marriage is calculated upon, ask them whether there is solid hope that the marriage will take place within a reasonable time. If not, then the same holds good as before. If, however, the affair will end in a decent and respectable matrimonial union, they being betrothed to each other, then the parties are "in occasione necessaria" and must be treated accordingly. Suggest to them such means as

are fit to remove the proximate danger. Tell the couple that their visits must not occur too often, that they must check their passionate love and not set aside the rules of external decency. Thus sitting up for several hours at night is improper in itself and must be shunned under all circumstances. When the man comes to see the young lady at her home, she must have her mother, sister, father, or someone else close by. A "solus cum sola" visit in a locked room or secret corner, a so-called stolen visit against the wish and will of the parents will end in crime and sin. St. Alphonsus speaks from his own experience which he had made as a confessor, when he says: "Generaliter loquendo de adolescentibus et puellis qui invicem se adamant, quippe non sunt isti omnes indistincte de gravi culpa damnandi, sed ordinarie puto ipsos difficulter esse extra occasionem proximam lethaliter peccandi. Id nimia experientia patet: nam ex centum adolescentibus vix duo aut tres in occasione a mortalibus invenientur immunes; et si non in principio saltem in progressu; tales enim adamantes prius conversantur invicem ob propensionem, deinde propensio fit passio, postquam radicem in corde fixerit, mentem obtenebrat et eos in mille crimina ruere facit." (Prax. conf., c. 4, n. 65.) Admonish the penitents to arm themselves by prayer and watchfulness. It is also good to awaken in the young lady keeping company for the sake of marriage a sort of laudable pride and jealousy as to her virtue and purity. Tell her that a man who abuses her before marriage is not worthy of her, and that she, in yielding to his entreaties, simply becomes the instrument of his vilest passions. By such and similar suggestions you may succeed in removing the immediate danger of sin, and if the penitents are willing to follow your advice, you may absolve them; if not, you ought to refuse absolution. "Solent in his casibus poenitentes conari, ut confessarii apprehendant, quod occasionem removendo magnum orietur scandalum. Fortis sit confessarius ad hujusmodi timores despiciendos, majus erit



scandalum videre, quod penitens nec etiam post confessionem occasionem aufert." (S. Alph. e. l.)

155. Occasions of sin always have been, and are yet, more perhaps in our present age than formerly, dances and gatherings for the sake of sensual amusement, not as if they were wrong intrinsically, but because they help to arouse feelings of lust and give rise to numerous temptations. Listen to the words of St. Francis of Sales: "Although balls and dancing be recreations of their own nature indifferent, yet, on account of the manner in which they are generally conducted, they preponderate very much on the side of evil and are consequently extremely dangerous." It is going too far for a priest to say: I shall never absolve a penitent that has been at a dance, but always give him first a penance, and then make him return after some time; or, I shall not absolve him unless he promises to shun balls and dances entirely; or, I shall under no consideration absolve a person who takes part in round dances. General rules like these cannot be admitted. You deal with individual souls, and you must, therefore, weigh all circumstances well before you come to a final judgment in regard to absolution. Therefore, we take the liberty to suggest the following:

(a) It makes quite a difference in what manner the dances are carried on; some by their very nature are more tempting than others. Thus masquerade balls, round dances, etc., should be shunned by good Catholics, unless there be an absolute necessity for them, and all precautions be taken to prevent abuses. Again, public dances held during Lent or Advent, on Saturday nights, keeping people away from church the next Sunday, ought to be discountenanced. Dances going on in public places or halls, in saloons or near them, where people of all kind and character meet, are, to say the least, very suspicious.

(b) Ask the penitent whether, at the occasion of these dances and parties, he has committed any sin, viz., by

impure thoughts and desires, by lustful kisses, embraces, touches, etc. If so, then these amusements are for that individual person a proximate occasion, and he ought to promise not to take any further part in them, if he desires to be absolved. If not, at any rate, the penitent must be admonished to be moderate and cautious in regard to these amusements. Those who have a passion for them, who go to almost any place, private or public, where they know a dance is going on, cannot keep pure for a long time, and are unworthy of absolution as long as they remain in that disposition. "*Et in hoc generaliter advertendum,*" says St. Alphonsus again, "*quod ubi agitur de periculo peccati formalis, et praeise peccati turpis, confessarius quanto magis rigorem cum poenitente adhibebit, tanto magis ejus saluti proderit: et contra tanto magis cum illo immanis erit, quanto magis benignus erit in permittendo, ut ille in occasione maneat aut se immittat.*" (Prax. conf. e. l.)

(c) Inquire whether there have been occasions of sin before and after the dances, during the recess, etc. Solitary walks or rides, company keeping in coming and returning are the very things by means of which but too often the devil lays his snares.

(d) Neither in the confessional or outside of it, give any positive approbation to the affair. We are sorry to say that this is done sometimes. Under the pretext of bringing Catholic families in contact with each other, of facilitating Catholic marriages, priests have public dances arranged for their parochial societies. We must say that this is a fatal and dangerous experiment. People, especially those of young age, will not draw the line, but make false conclusions; bad effects and disastrous scandals of the worst kind may be the outcome. You are allowed to tolerate at times an evil which you cannot stop, but a toleration must not be turned into approbation. Indeed, the very toleration itself has its limits. Things, perhaps, have come to such a point that, unless you raise your voice publicly against certain abuses in the line of dances and

parties, many a soul shall be lost for which you are responsible.

156. What has been said of dances must be applied also *mutatis mutandis* to theaters. It is a deplorable fact that the public stage in our days has become awfully corrupt and degraded. Pure classical pieces, which instill nobility of mind and heart and help to educate and elevate man, are exceptions. The great public does not appreciate them, but desires to see something which flatters the senses and fills the lustful appetite. It is self-evident, therefore, that the greatest caution is needed in frequenting theaters and operas. Those who run to almost any one, regardless of what is represented, expose themselves rashly to sin and temptation, and it would be a wonder indeed if they were to remain pure and chaste for any length of time. A confessor who has to deal with these penitents cannot be silent without failing in his duty. If you cannot prevail upon them to quit the thing entirely, warn them at least to act with prudence and circumspection. Tell them to be on their guard against temptation and not to seek sensual gratification, but a higher culture by means of these theatrical representations. In particular, induce them to shun the ballets, because frequently they are directly obscene and lascivious. Also call the attention of parents to this affair, and remind them of their obligation to watch over the spiritual welfare of their sons and daughters and to keep them from places which are dangerous to their virtue.

157. A last, but not least, source of moral evil and occasion of numerous sins, which deserves special attention, are bad books, magazines, and papers. The spiritual damage accruing from these channels of corruption seems not to be fully understood by the majority of our Catholic people. Everybody likes to read, and, bad literature being very cheap, persons grasp at it without taking into consideration the noxious results which such reading will have in the end. The law of the Index with many seems to be but a dead letter. A Catholic priest should raise his voice

against this crying evil of the age, not only from the pulpit, but also warn and instruct his penitents in the privacy of the confessional. There are books decidedly irreligious, written with an *ex professo* intention to undermine the Christian faith or to ridicule Catholic belief. These books could, under no circumstances, be read or simply retained by a Catholic. Other books are *ex professo* immoral. Tell your penitent, if he ever read such, never to do it again, and to destroy those he should have in his possession. But what about the reading of romances, novels, etc.? As long as they are not absolutely bad, they could be tolerated with certain restrictions. The element of sensual love which pervades them is dangerous. The penitent who accuses himself that he had read story books of this kind ought to be asked, as to what has been his intention, if he had yielded to temptations. The answer he gives to your questions will indicate what to do. Whenever there is a proximate occasion of committing sin by bad thoughts and desires, he must be ordered to quit such reading, as otherwise he cannot be absolved. Nobody ought to have a passion for this sort of literature, because it disposes at once for sinful emotions. "*Libri erotici occasio relativa sunt. Gravitas periculi ut plurimum dependet a circumstantiis, nempe a fine libidinoso, a lectoris aetate, indole, moribus, fragilitate, maxime vero a lapsuum experientia. Propterea ejusmodi libri omnes periculosi sunt juvenibus et ordinarie periculum proximum aderit pro iis qui toti sunt in hujusmodi libris legendis, non vero pro iis qui interdum aliquem legunt.*" (Hilarius a Sexten. Theol. pastoral. de sacramentis.) Parents and teachers must watch their children or pupils, lest books dangerous to their faith and morals get into their hands. The daily papers, containing but too much corruption and moral filth, ought to be kept out of the home circle; that is to say, the young must not be allowed to read them. Parents who are regardless of this duty cannot be absolved. Let them bear in mind the strong words in the

Pastoral Letter issued by the Fathers of the Third Council of Baltimore: "Not only should the immoral, the vulgar, the sensational novel, the indecently illustrated newspaper, and publications tending to weaken faith in the religion and Church of Jesus Christ, be absolutely excluded from every Catholic home, but the dangerously exciting and morbidly emotional, whatever, in a word, is calculated to impair or lower the tone of faith or morals in the youthful mind and heart should be carefully banished."

#### H—GENERAL CONFESSIONS.

158. A general confession is a repetition of former confessions and of sins which the penitent has accused himself of aforetime. It may cover either the whole of a man's life or only a certain period, viz., one or more years. Substantially it does not differ from an ordinary confession, but by its accessories it may be of greater benefit to the penitent. This is the reason why we desire to make a general confession once in a while. However, a certain discrimination ought to be made, because sometimes it is not good to resort to this mode of confessing. The rules are:

(a) A general confession is necessary for all those who have made sacrilegious or invalid confessions before, either because they wilfully concealed mortal sins, or because they had no true contrition and no firm resolution, or, finally, because the confessor was wanting in jurisdiction. The only way to rectify the past confessions is to confess once more all those sins which have been mentioned before, with all their accessories, viz., number and circumstances.

(b) A general confession is highly advisable for those who have well founded doubts as to their past confessions, for instance, because they at the time when these confessions were performed were subject to bad habits which

they did not care much to subdue, or lived in dangerous occasions which they did not quit. Their life's mode, bad as it was then, showed little change for the better; they made some efforts after their confessions to amend themselves, but hardly enough. This gives sufficient reason to doubt about their contrition. Penitents of this kind, who have now totally done away with their old disorders, should not be prevented from a general confession if on their own accord they desire to make one. To those who do not think of it the confessor may give a prudent hint in this regard.

(c) A general confession is useful to all people at certain epochs of their lives or under certain circumstances. Thus it will be of much benefit to make a general confession before the first Communion, before entering into the marital state, the state of the priesthood, the religious state, at a mission or retreat, before a long journey, in danger of death, in old age. If a person has once made a good general confession of his whole life, after he had reached the age of puberty, it would not be advisable to make one of the whole life again, but only of a certain period.

(d) Scrupulous people should never make a general confession. Indeed, they ought to be positively forbidden to do it, because it will hurt them, it will increase their scrupulosity. Neither should persons who have sinned much by various crimes of impurity, and who have just got rid of these sins, at once be permitted to make a general confession. The recollection of their filthy actions may give rise to new temptations; let them wait until the old sores have been healed.

159. Whenever a person desires to make a general confession, inquire about the reason. If there is no absolute necessity for it, if one desires it only for the tranquility of his conscience, then point out to him the particular day and hour at which you will be ready, but give to the person forthwith some instruction as to the manner of preparing



himself. If there is an obligation of a general confession, because past confessions have been invalid, and if the penitent be well prepared, you better go to work at once, unless it should take too long, viz., a confession of the whole life.

160. As to the particular mode of procedure, it will be best to let the penitent go on in his own way, but make him tell first the sins committed since his last confession. Never hurry him, but patiently listen, that he may have a chance completely to unburden his conscience. If you do not know the particulars of the penitent, it may help to ask a few previous questions, viz., how old are you, what state of life is yours, what is your present occupation, in what different conditions and circumstances have you been formerly? If the past confessions have been good, tell the penitent that he need not be over-anxious in stating everything. However, sometimes a sin or circumstance may be confessed now which formerly had been forgotten. Instruct the penitent beforehand to call your special attention to this. After the confession is over, ask such questions which you deem necessary and give the proper admonitions. If the penitent is a little ashamed and reluctant, exhort and encourage him. Make him tell first those sins that are the hardest to confess, viz., sins of impurity. In case sacrilegious confessions should have been made, inquire whether other sacraments, Holy Communion, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, Matrimony, have been received in this unhappy state. In the end ask the penitent if he has still something to say.

161. Take pains to excite the penitent to a true contrition. Show him the mercy of God, who allowed him to live in spite of his many sins; remind him of the grace he now had of making a general confession, for which the lost souls in hell might justly envy him; encourage him to begin an entirely new life; finally, assign to him a suitable penance, and point out the time when he should come again to confession. After you have absolved and dismissed him, do not forget to thank the Almighty for the

favor bestowed upon you in making you the instrument of thus cleansing a soul from many a sinful spot.

Special literature on the Sacrament of Penance:

St. Alphonsus, Praxis confessarii.

Berardi, De recidivis et occasionariis.

Hilarius a Sexten, Theologia pastoralis de sacramentis.

Reuter, Neoconfessarius (German, Der Beichtvater).

Segneri, Confessarius instructus (German, Unterweisungen fuer Beichtvaeter).

Salvatori, Instruction for New Confessors.

Wittmann, Der Beichtvater fuer das jugendliche Alter.

Gaume, Handbuch fuer Beicht<sup>v</sup>ater. *Beichtvaeter*

Tappehorn, Anleitung zur Verwaltung des Buss sacramentes.

Jaegers, Instruction for First Confession.

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## CHAPTER V.

## THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

## ARTICLE I.

## PASTORAL VISITS TO THE SICK AND DYING.

162. Great as the merit is which a priest may obtain through the zealous work of love performed on a poor sinner in the confessional, it becomes greater when this very same work is done to the soul which is about leaving this world and approaching that moment on which all depends, viz., the moment of death. Hard and difficult, it is true, this work will sometimes be, but a priest ought to find consolation in the thought that thus he takes the place of an angel of God, entrusted with the sublime office of accompanying a soul redeemed by the blood of Christ to the throne of the Almighty in heaven. And that soul, saved through his ministry, will not be ungrateful, but pray for her spiritual father with the fervor and efficacy of a saint. "Never do we walk more closely in the foot-prints of the Prince of Pastors," says Cardinal Gibbons, "never do we more nearly resemble Him, never are we more in touch with Him than when we bear the message of condolence to the house of mourning." Always bear this in mind when, in the discharge of the sacred ministry, duty bids you to hasten to the bedside of the sick and dying. Do not murmur because it is night and you are

disturbed in your sleep, because the journey is long and arduous, because you have to stand the inclemency of the weather, because you lose much of your precious time, which you intended to spend in occupations more according to your liking. As soon as the news reaches you that a person living within your district is sick and wishes to see you, go at once; show no external signs of anger and impatience; neither feel internally indignant; on the contrary, accept the sacrifice with perfect resignation; thus, and thus alone, your work shall bear its fruit, and you shall have merit for your soul. We grant that some people are unreasonable in their demands, that they call for a priest without real necessity, or at a very inconvenient hour, when they might just as well have waited. In a case like this, if you are pressed by other urgent occupations of your charge, viz., the hearing of confessions, the instruction of children, etc., there is no harm in postponing that visit to the sick; however, you must not send off the party in a rude way, but kindly say that you will come later. As a rule, you cannot well decline a sick call altogether, though you may have reason to presume that the disease is not dangerous or of a serious character. If, in arriving at the place, you discover the fact and notice at once that there was no need of your visit, it may be hard to keep your temper. Yet do not scold the people, and, least of all, the sick person, because it may have a bad effect for the future; bear things with silent patience and believe that God has given you a chance to make some reparation for your own sins. Besides, it happens, indeed not unfrequently, that a priest is called to a sick person who appears to be in no imminent danger of death, and yet falls into agony almost immediately after the priest's departure. This occurs especially with old people and such as are suffering from heart disease. Hence, as a rule, do not refuse to go whenever a sick call is announced, lest you run the risk of letting somebody die without spiritual aid, without the Sacraments.

163. The visit paid by a priest to a sick member of his flock is not only a friendly call, he ought to enter the house of sorrow as the ambassador of Christ, as the minister of the Church empowered to console, to help, and to relieve the poor sufferer by supernatural means. With prudence and charity he should try to perform his task. You desire to have a practical guide in this regard. Very well, just follow the instruction set apart in the Roman Ritual under the heading, "*De visitatione et cura infirmorum.*" We take the liberty to insert a few hints suggested by this instruction.

164. "*Parochus imprimis meminisse debet, non postremas esse muneris sui partes, aegrotantium curam habere. Quare cum primum noverit, quempiam ex fidelibus suae curae commissis aegrotare, non expectabit ut ad eum vocetur, sed ultro ad eum accedat; idque non semel tantum, sed saepius, quatenus opus fuerit; horteturque parochianos suos, ut ipsum admoneant, cum aliquem in parochia sua aegrotare contigerit, praecique si morbus gravior fuerit.*" These words plainly indicate that every priest charged with the care of souls is bound to visit the sick members of his flock. He must go, not only when he is called for, or when death is near at hand, but he is urged to make these visits of his own accord as soon as he hears that one is ill. "The medical adviser," says Cardinal Gibbons, "is prompt at the call of duty at all hours of the night. Surely the physician of the soul should not be outdone in this respect by the physician of the body." With good pious Catholics there is no difficulty; they, whenever they become sick, will not fail to notify their pastor; but nominal Catholics, or their friends, often wait until the extreme moment has come, until all hope is gone, and the infirm person is in real agony, speechless and senseless, perhaps. Therefore, the priest should make the first step and pay a friendly visit to the lost sheep now in the claws of death, that he may gain his confidence and prepare the ground. In cities where the

district is not so large, and conveyances of all kinds are at hand, the thing does not appear to be difficult; in country missions it is harder; still, something must be done there, too, and even the extra expense which you may have cannot be admitted as sufficient reason for not visiting the sick. Your duty does not cease, either, after all the Sacraments have been administered and all rites have been performed. The patient may linger yet awhile, survive for several days, weeks, or even months. If so, you ought to renew your visits as often as circumstances allow or the spiritual condition of the dying party demands. You may hear his confession again, give him Holy Communion once more, and by pious exhortations prepare his soul still better for the last struggle.

165. "*Aegrotos visitans ea, qua Sacerdotes Domini decet, honestate et gravitate se habeat, ut non aegris solum, sed sibi et domesticis verbo et exemplo prosit ad salutem.*" In visiting the sick a priest must never forget that he comes as a messenger of Heaven. To talk of nothing but profane matters, to joke and laugh, to prolong the visit, so as to cause molestation, especially at night, is rather improper. There is no objection to exhilarating the infirm party, but let it be done so as to keep away all vulgarity. "*Eorum praecipue curam geret, qui humanis auxiliis destituti, benigni ac providi Pastoris caritatem et operam requirunt.*" The poor and needy should be supported also temporally. Our Lord Jesus Christ gives us an example by which we may learn to combine both the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. The man sick with palsy was first cured from the malady of his soul by the words: "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" next from his bodily ailment by the sentence: "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." It would be well for every priest to follow the footsteps of his Divine Master and alleviate, according to the best of his means, also the physical sufferings of a patient. The little pecuniary sacrifices thus made will always have their reward. Sick people, as a rule, are thankful for the atten-



tion shown to their wants and ailments. Even small gifts, such as a few pieces of fruit, a bottle of wine, and other delicacies, which you bring along, are received with a grateful mind. Therefore, try to win their affections in this way; your spiritual ministry will thus be rendered more effective. Also, have the rich and wealthy members of your parish interested in the sick and induce them to help such as are suffering and have nobody to take care of them. Whenever the sickness is acute and dangerous, parties should not omit to consult a doctor. People in the United States often abhor and decline the services of a medical physician. Formerly, when the medical art and profession was not so well developed, there may have been just reason for this. But at present good and experienced physicians can be found almost anywhere. Therefore, a pastor should induce his sick parishioners to send for one whenever the condition is precarious. It is not right for a priest to act as medical adviser himself. "*Medicinam et chirurgiam nec lucri gratia nec caritatis specie exerceant. Qua in re, tam clero universo, quam personis quibuscumque votis religiosis obstrictis caute servanda precipimus ea, quae constitutionibus Apostolicis statuta a Benedicto XIV. traduntur.*" (Conc. Baltim. III., n. 82.) Do not alter the prescriptions of the physician, only if a physician should use means which are sinful and criminal, such as craniotomy, abortion, unwarrantable hypnosis, etc., it becomes the duty of a pastor to intervene.

166. "*Imprimis autem spiritualem aegrotantium curam suscipiat omnemque diligentiam in eo ponat ut in viam salutis eos dirigat atque a diabolicis insidiis salutarium adjumentorum praesidio defendat ac tueatur.*" Unless there be immediate danger that suffers no further delay, it will be best not to mention anything about confession at once, but to speak to the sick person first in a general way on the duties which he has now, being stricken down with disease and unable to pursue his ordinary work. Admonish him to accept all pains and suffer-

ings with perfect patience and resignation; to offer them to God in expiation for his sins; not to murmur against the decrees of Divine Providence, nor to complain about want of consideration on the part of his attendants. The time of sickness is a time of grace, but only for those who bear things quietly and peacefully in a spirit of faith and love. It may be difficult to convince the sick person of this, especially if he has been careless in his duties towards God and the Church when he was in good health. The proper mode to proceed is first to gain the full confidence of the patient, so that he may consider you a true friend, who means well and who is prompted by feelings of charity and sympathy to pay him a visit and sit down at his bedside. Hence, inquire about the nature of his disease, the particular ailment he suffers from, etc. Then, almost imperceptibly, infuse into his heart wholesome thoughts. Little anecdotes about what you have seen and experienced yourself, or examples chosen from the lives of the saints, will be to the purpose and contribute a great deal towards arousing the right sentiments. But all these things must be told in a friendly, conversational tone and rather sparingly, so as not to molest the sick person.

167. "*Deinde qua par est prudentia et caritate, hominem ad sacram confessionem inducat et confitentem audiat, etiamsi velit totius vite peccata confiteri.*" The main thing, no doubt, which a pastor of souls, in dealing with the sick members of his parish, must look after is the reception of the Sacraments in particular confession. The sooner they attend to this the better it will be for them. Then all can be done with calmness and full deliberation of mind; whilst, if you wait until the disease has progressed and assumed more perilous symptoms, there is danger that you shall have to do things hurriedly. The body afterwards will be too weak, the mind too excited, and it may be hard to awaken the right disposition. With people who have called for the priest there is no trouble; they will always be ready to confess at once. With others

who have not thought of sending for the priest, and to whom the latter comes on his own accord, it may be somewhat difficult to induce them to confess. If the disease is of a kind as to prove fatal in the end, or which may all at once take a serious change, not much time ought to be lost. Even good and pious people sometimes dread to confess, though they are seriously ill, because they are under the hallucination that there is no danger, that they will be soon well again. If so, you must not shrink from telling them the plain truth in regard to their condition. In connection with this matter we cannot help to make a remark about sick priests. It is a sad fact that but too many priests die either suddenly or at least without receiving the last Sacraments. In more than one case we believe this could have been prevented if they had been admonished by a brother priest in due time and season. Whenever you hear that a confrere of yours living in your neighborhood is sick, always deem it an act of charity and duty to visit him. If you notice there is some danger of which the poor man may not be aware himself, tell him directly and plainly what is to be done; assist him yourself, or else get another priest in whom he has confidence, to do it. Also ask him as to his temporal matters; if he has not settled them yet, he should do so without delay.

168. In hearing the confession of the infirm person, be not too hard, viz., too anxious to find out all the details, species, number, etc., at least if the penitent is suffering much and scarcely able to recollect sufficiently. A slight defect of this kind may be remedied afterwards in case he should get well again. Always, however, ask the penitent whether he feels perfectly secure and at ease about his past life and former confessions. Inquire whether he has injured anyone in his property or good name, for which reparation must yet be made, whether he has entertained hatred or ill-feeling against his neighbor, and, if so, whether he be willing to forgive and to pardon. Should the penitent on his own accord desire to make a general

confession, do not refuse it, even if there be no absolute necessity for it, because it helps a great deal to tranquilize the conscience. Last, but not least, arouse the sick person to an act of perfect contrition, because this is the principal requisite to obtain forgiveness from God. Without it everything else will avail nothing. Therefore, place before the patient's mind the various motives why he should feel sorry for his past delinquencies; soften his heart by calling his attention to the love our Saviour bears towards us in His passion and sufferings; raise his soul to hope and confidence, if he should be inclined to despair.

169. "*Quod si aeger aliquis hortationibus ac monitis sacerdotum vel amicorum et domesticorum consiliis adduci non potest, ut velit peccata sua confiteri, tunc non omnino desparanda res est, sed quamdiu ille vivit, repetendae sunt frequenter variae et efficaces sacerdotum et aliorum piorum hominum exhortationes. Adhibendae sunt etiam tunc privatae, tum publicae ad Deum preces ad divinam gratiam impetrandam pro salute misere decumbentis.*" Those who apparently in no way can be induced to confess their sins and prepare themselves for death, may try a priest's patience, prudence, and perseverance to the very utmost. Inquire into the cause of this obstinacy and try to remove it; with it the dread which the poor sinner has of confession will also vanish. Some hate to confess because they have neglected the Sacraments for a long time; others because they are members of forbidden secret societies, or because they live in an invalid marriage. Some may have to restore ill-gotten goods which they deem too hard or impossible, or they live on bad terms with their neighbors and are not willing to forgive the wrongs they have suffered. With many indifference in matters of faith, or infidelity, caused through loose morals, stand in the way of conversion. By questioning either the sick man himself, or his friends and relatives, the true and hidden cause why the Sacraments are obstinately refused may be brought to light. The main thing for you

is to pray and to induce others to pray, since a final conversion, after all, is the work of divine grace. The Holy Sacrifice of Mass or a special memento made during Mass, the recitation of the Rosary, a novena, the offering of candles, etc., will be very available. At any rate, do not give up hope, even if the case seems to be ever so desperate. It is the old struggle between Christ and Belial. The price held out, namely, a soul that shall praise God forever in heaven, is well worth the labor and sacrifice which a priest undergoes.

169. "*Videbit denique sacerdos, quibus potissimum tentationibus aut pravis opinionibus aeger sit subjectus eique prout opus fuerit apta remedia prudenter adhibebit.*" The confession of the sick person will reveal to the priest the weak points of his soul. It then becomes his duty to teach the infirm penitent the means by which he ought to arm himself against particular temptations, the prayers which he should say, the examples of our Lord and His saints, which he should propose to his mind. Do not omit to instruct the penitent on perfect contrition, its nature and its effects, admonish him frequently to make an act of such contrition, especially when he should happen to feel his last moment approaching. If he has not been enrolled in the confraternity of the brown scapular of Mount Carmel, enroll him at once, provided you have the faculty. Let him know the special privileges connected with the scapular and the conditions for gaining the indulgences attached to it. Leave instructions also with those who wait on the sick party, tell them what spiritual aid they should lend him, what prayers they should say when the patient shall begin to sink and when death shall be near. Even if he be senseless, the friends at his bedside should not omit to whisper into his ears short invocations, supplications for mercy, the holy names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the acts of faith, hope, love, contrition, etc. "*Vasculum item adsit aquae benedictae, qua frequenter aspergatur.*"

170. "Si morbus gravior vel cum periculo fuerit; aegroto suadeat, ut dum integra mente est, rem suam omnem recte constituat et testamentum faciat; si quid habeat alienum restituat, et ad remedium animae suae pro facultatibus, quod in Domino ei placuerit, disponat; sed haec suggerendo omnis avaritiae nota caveatur." It is the duty of every man when he is about to die to settle his affairs, if he has any to settle. All ill-gotten goods must be restored, vows and promises be fulfilled, and debts paid as far as possible. It is advisable to ask the person in confession whether he has any obligation not yet complied with, and, if so, lend him afterwards all the assistance needed. Rich and well-to-do folks who have not done much as to works of charity during their former days, should be induced to make some provisions to this effect in their last will; but a priest, in suggesting it, must be careful to avoid every species of selfishness and avarice.

## ARTICLE II.

### THE LAST RITES. PREPARATION FOR DEATH.

#### A—THE VIATICUM.

171. A Catholic who is stricken down with a disease which shall likely terminate in death, is bound not only to confess his sins, but to receive two other Sacraments especially adapted to his needs, because they furnish a special grace for the last agony and that formidable moment which decides about the eternal fate of man. These two Sacraments are Holy Communion, then called the Viaticum, and Extreme Unction. The ministration of them is a parochial function in a strict sense; that is to say, no one except the parish priest is entitled to give these two Sacraments to the faithful of his charge. Others, in



particular religious, may do so only if they have a permission (a *licentia praesumpta*, suffices) from the *parochus proprius*, and if the latter is unable or unwilling to attend to the sick person.

172. We are obliged by a divine precept to receive Holy Communion, when in danger of death, as a protection against the assaults of the evil enemy in the last struggle. Even if a person should have communicated a few days previously through devotion, there being then no danger of death, he ought to partake of the Holy Food again when that danger has set in. This is at least the more probable opinion. Pastors of souls are strictly commanded to watch lest any one under their spiritual charge depart without this so efficacious means of grace. "*Viaticum sacratissimi Corporis Domini Nostri Jesu Christi summo studio ac diligentia aegrotantibus opportuno tempore, procurandum est, ne forte contingat illos tanto bono Parochi incuria privatos decedere.*" (Rit. Rom.) The name *Viaticum* signifies food for the journey, by which we pass from this mortal life of ours into the regions of eternity. "*Pro Viatico autem ministrabit, cum probabile est quod eam amplius sumere non poterit.*"

173. The rubrics of administering Holy Communion "*per modum Viatici*" differ somewhat from those to be observed under ordinary circumstances. First of all, the sick person need not be fasting.—*Potest quidem Viaticum brevi morituris dari non jejunis.*—Again, the priest is directed not to use the form "*Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi,*" etc., but that other form: "*Accipe frater (soror) Viaticum,* etc." If the sick person, after having received the *Viaticum*, lingers for some time, and wishes to partake of Holy Communion once more, it should not be refused. "*Quodsi aeger sumpto Viatico, dies aliquot vixerit vel periculum mortis evaserit, et communicare voluerit, ejus pio desiderio Parochus non deerit.*" (Rit. Rom.) It may be asked, though, what form should be used in that case. Authorities are divided on this point. O'Kane

(Notes on Rubrics) maintains that as long as there is real danger of death, the form "Accipe frater," etc., ought to be adopted, and we believe this to be the more proper way.

174. Strictly speaking, the Blessed Sacrament should be brought to the private houses of the dying with that external pomp and splendor which is due to the Lord of heaven and earth hidden under the species of bread. Circumstances, however, may be such as to render it impossible, especially in a country like America, where Catholics are in the minority, and where a public procession with the Sacred Host is sure to meet with ridicule and insult on the part of heretics. Therefore, the clergy in the United States are wont to obtain a special faculty which reads this way: "Deferendi SSimum Sacramentum occulte ad infirmos sine lumine, illudque sine eodem retinendi pro iisdem infirmis, in loco tamen decenti, si ab haereticis et infidelibus sit periculum sacrilegii." Consequently in this country the priest goes to the house of the sick person in his ordinary dress, but he should bring along the vestments which the rubrics require him to put on during the sacred function, viz., cassock, surplice, and stole. The stole\* he is directed to wear under his coat, the other vestments, together with the necessary articles, he ought to carry in a little valise or traveling bag. The "occulta delatio SSimi" is to be limited only to public streets and places. Hence, in church, before you start on your journey, when taking out the Sacred Host from the tabernacle, have two candles lighted on the altar, put on the cassock, surplice, and stole; then go to the altar in a devout manner, open the tabernacle, get the ciborium and place one small host (or, if you have to see several sick persons at the same time, as many

\*The stole ought to be always white, no matter what color the office of the day requires. Still, as you need a purple stole in hearing the confession and for the sacrament of Extreme Unction, it is advisable to have a stole which is white on one side and purple on the other.

as their number requires) in the little pyx. Then replace the ciborium and lock the tabernacle. This being done, arrange the pyx containing the Host for the journey, viz.: have it enveloped in a small corporal and leather bursa lined with silk. This bursa, fastened by strong cords around the neck, you ought to place on your breast under your coat or vest. Hereupon you leave the altar as usually, return to the sacristy, and put on your civil dress. If the journey be long, it is advisable to have somebody accompany you, that, if any accident should happen to you, no profanation of the Blessed Sacrament might follow. Be careful to avoid, as long as you thus carry the Lord of eternal Majesty on your own person, everything which savors of irreverence. Do not smoke on the way or indulge in idle talk; rather betake yourself to silent prayer. "*Eucharistia reverenter deferenda est, servato quatenus fieri potest silentio. Graviter enim peccat qui tantum Sacramentum deferens colloquia inania miscet.*" (Kenrick Theol. mor. tom. II. p. 134, n. 26.)

175. Having arrived at his destination and entering the house, the priest says: "*Pax huic domui,*" takes out the pyx from his breast and puts it on the table prepared. Then genuflecting with both knees for a moment he adores the Blessed Sacrament. Those present, if they be Catholics, should join in this adoration. "*Praemoneat (parochus) ut aegri cubiculum mundetur et in eo paretur mensa linteo mundo cooperta in quo SS. Sacramentum decenter deponatur. Parentur luminaria ac duo vascula, alterum cum vino alterum cum aqua. Praeterea linteum mundum ante pectus communicandi ponatur atque alia ad ornatum loci pro cujusque facultate.*" (Rit. Rom.) There should be a table covered with a clean napkin and on the table a crucifix between two wax candles, a vessel with holy water, a cup with clean water or wine for the ablution, a clean linen cloth, towel or handkerchief to serve as a communion cloth. If Extreme Unction is administered, they ought to have a plate there with cotton balls,

some bread, and a basin with water and towel, that you may wash your hands that have touched the holy oil. Teach the children, especially the girls, how to prepare everything in the room when the priest comes to give the last sacraments. Praise those that have had everything ready, and tell it in several places. Then it will be introduced in the parish in a short time.

176. Having paid your homage of adoration to the Blessed Sacrament, you will rise and put on the vestments prescribed for the sacred function, *i. e.*, cassock, surplice, and stole,\* and proceed in the very same order as the ritual points out. First, sprinkle the sick person and the room with Holy Water, saying the antiphon, "Asperges me," etc. "His dictis, accedat ad infirmum ut cognoscat num sit bene dispositus ad accipiendum sacrum Viaticum, et utrum velit aliqua peccata confiteri; et illum audiat atque absolvat, quamvis prius deberet esse rite confessus, nisi necessitas aliter urgeat." (Rit. Rom.) This rubric supposes that the priest has heard the confession of the sick on a previous visit. If so, you will simply ask the patient whether he would like to confess once more. This is the proper way, indeed. But in America, priests are often called to see sick people who live at quite a distance from the church, and you are expected to administer all rites at once. Therefore, after the introductory ceremonies just mentioned, tell the folks present to leave the room. Then, being alone with the infirm person, hear his confession. When the confession has come to an end, call in the people again, and bid them to kneel down to pray and assist devoutly at the rites which follow.

\* We have been told that some priests in the United States while on a sick call take no vestment along except the stole, which they put over the ordinary civil dress, thus administering all the sacraments "*cum sola stola.*" We consider this an abuse which, apart from an absolute necessity, should not be tolerated. The cassock and surplice should be made of light material so as to be of little weight and to cause no inconvenience in traveling.

177. The first rite is the administration of the Viaticum. The Roman Ritual has a note: "*Id tamen diligenter curandum est, ne iis tribuatur (Viaticum) a quibus ob phrenesim sive ob assiduam tussim aliumve similem morbum aliqua indecentia cum injuria tanti Sacramenti timeri potest.*" Hence, you must not omit to inquire whether the sick person is subject to constant coughing, vomiting, etc. If so, you ought to wait and not give him Holy Communion. To those who are unconscious, but who may be justly presumed to be in the state of grace, Holy Communion may and should be given if they will swallow the Sacred Species quietly and there be no danger of irreverence. (Lehmkuhl Theol. moral. II. vol., n. 146). Let us suppose, therefore, that there be no objection; then the mode of acting is this: The priest goes to the table where the Blessed Sacrament is placed, and, having genuflected, uncovers the pyx. Meanwhile the communion cloth should be adjusted under the chin of the sick person. Then follows the Confiteor which, in the absence of a server, is to be recited by the priest himself. After the Confiteor you will rise and say "*Misereatur,*" etc., and "*Indulgentiam,*" etc., but in the singular form "*Misereatur tui*"—"Indulgentiam et remissionem peccatorum tuorum." Hereupon you will kneel again, take the Sacred Host from the pyx and, standing erect, show it to the infirm party, saying: "*Ecce Agnus Dei,*" etc., and three times "*Domine non sum dignus,*" etc., which latter ought to be repeated at least once in the vernacular by the sick man. "*Et infirmus simul cum sacerdote dicat eadem verba saltem semel, submissa voce.* Tunc, sacerdos dans infirmo Eucharistiam dicat: "*Accipe frater (vel soror) Viaticum Corporis Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui te custodiat ab hoste maligno et perducatur te in vitam aeternam. Amen.*" After the Viaticum has been received, you must purify the pyxis and your fingers in a cup or glass containing about one spoonful of water or wine; then wipe your fingers with

the purificator, which you have brought along, and let the sick person take the ablution, if he could do so conveniently; otherwise have it poured into the fire. The ceremony is concluded by several versicles and prayers as found in the Ritual and by benediction after the mode that is observed when Holy Communion is administered *extra Missam*; but if perchance a Host should have been left in the pyx, you will give benediction with the latter.

#### B—EXTREME UNCTION.

178. Extreme Unction is a sacrament instituted by Christ for those who are suffering from sickness liable to end with death. “Anima christiani hominis periclitaturum maxime cum in summo vitæ discrimine versatur. Ut enim Apostoli verbis utamur, descendit diabolus ad eam habens iram magnam, sciens quod modicum tempus habet. Infirmitas quoque ac dolores corporis, intellectum obscurant ac fere obruunt viresque voluntatis minuunt et labefactant. Cui periculo sapientissimus atque amantissimus Salvator noster sacro Extremæ Uctionis ritu misericorditer prospexit, quo per olei ab Episcopo benedicti unctionem orationemque seu formam præscriptam, baptizatis graviter aegrotantibus confertur presbyterorum ministerio gratia, cujus ope delicta si quæ sint adhuc expianda et peccati reliquiae abstergantur, augentur vires ad insidias daemonis propulsandas morbi que incommoda fortiter toleranda; sanitas quoque corporis ubi salutis animæ expedierit, restituitur” (Conc. Baltim. II. n. 303. 304).

179. The *materia proxima* of this Sacrament is the anointing with holy oil. The oil must have been blessed previously as “oleum infirmorum” by the bishop. The form of the Sacrament consists in the prayer accompanying the anointing, viz.: “Per istam sanctam unctionem et suam piissimam misericordiam indulgeat tibi Dominus



quidquid per visum, auditum, etc., deliquisti. Amen." Any Catholic who has been baptised and has come to the use of reason, so as to be able to commit sin, may and should receive this Sacrament if he be dangerously ill. Infants who have not reached the age of discretion are excluded from it. If you doubt about their discretion, you may anoint them conditionally (*si sis capax*). It is not necessary to wait for the last agony; on the contrary, it is highly advisable to receive this Sacrament in the very first stages of sickness. Only then we have reason to hope that its full effects might be realized. What are these effects? The Apostle St. James (c. v. 14, 15.) tells us: "*Infirmatur quis in vobis? Inducat presbyteros ecclesiae et orent super eum, ungentes eum oleo in nomine Domini; et oratio fidei salvabit infirmum, et alleviabit eum Dominus; et si in peccatis sit remittentur ei.*" These words leave no doubt. Extreme Unction is to give us strength that we may bear with patience and resignation the pains and hardships of the bodily disease which has befallen us. Again, by means of this Sacrament, we shall be prepared for the last struggle, of which sickness is a prelude. Our sins shall be forgiven in as far as they have not yet been forgiven through sacramental absolution, evil habits and temptations that might endanger our salvation shall lose their force, and finally also the bodily illness shall be either cured or at least relieved. It is evident that all these effects, in particular the last one, cannot be obtained so well if the reception of the sacrament is postponed until the final and extreme combat between life and death, because the sick person could hardly then be able to dispose himself for a worthy and fruitful reception. People sometimes dread to be anointed because they believe this to be a sure sign of death, cutting off all hope of recovery. They ought to be disabused of this error and be well instructed so that they might take a correct view of the matter.

180. Extreme Unction can be received only once dur-

ing the same sickness. However, if a person having sufficiently recruited, meets with a relapse, it is not wrong to anoint him again. Cases of this kind may occur especially with parties suffering from heart disease, typhoid fever, or with consumptive people. Do not be scrupulous in this regard, even if you should have to anoint one several times within the space of a few months. The term "dangerous sickness" must not be limited too much, either. It is not necessary to ask first for a certificate of a physician; if, in your own judgment, you deem it probable that the person who has sent for you is considerably ill, weak or prostrate, you should not hesitate to give Extreme Unction. Under the head of dangerous sickness also comes old age, confinement of a woman with child, especially if she be going through the crisis the first time, and a serious surgical operation. But in the last two cases you ought to wait until there are symptoms of real danger, to-wit, a disordered bodily constitution in consequence of the confinement or operation. As a rule, a person ought to be anointed only after he has made his confession, after he has been duly absolved, and received the Viaticum, because Extreme Unction is a Sacrament of the living that requires the state of grace. However, if you find the sick party unconscious and speechless, you must proceed at once. First give him conditional absolution and then anoint him. If afterwards he should become conscious again he ought to confess; if not, if he should happen to die, Extreme Unction will wash away the stain of mortal guilt, provided he had internal contrition or at least attrition. "*Quoad iudicium de dispositione subjecti ferendum id notari debet, etsi quantum fieri possit dispositio necessaria et status gratiae certissime procurandus est, nihilominus quando plus haberi nequeat, sufficere ut non constet de indispositione, quia in extremo periculo omnia tenenda sunt. Neque adjici debet conditio "si dispositus es;" extrema unctio absolute conferri debet si homo capax est unctionis sacramenti valide reci-*

piendi sub conditione tunc tantum quando dubium est num valide recipere possit. Quare excludi non debent ab extrema unctione sensibus destituti, qui parum christiane vixerunt neque qui in ipso actu peccati, signo poenitentiae non manifestato, sensibus destituuntur, quibus quamquam Eucharistia danda non est tamen cum conditionata absolutione extrema unctio omnino concedenda est. Nam si forte internum actum attritionis miser peccator habuit, longe tutius immo certo ejus salus procurabitur per unctionem, per absolutionem valde dubie" (Lehmkuhl theol. moral. vol. II. n. 577).

181. The practical mode of proceeding in the administration of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction may be summed up thus: The priest, being vested in cassock, surplice and purple stole, first presents the crucifix to the sick person, who will kiss it, that thus he may declare his faith and hope in Christ crucified. Next, the priest sprinkles with holy water the sick, the room, and all who are present. After this, so the Ritual directs, he ought to give a short instruction (cf. *Excerpta Rit. Rom. Append.*) on the nature and efficacy of the Sacrament, exhorting the infirm party to renew his confidence in his Lord and Redeemer. Then follow three orations. They are arranged in a beautiful way to invoke the aid of the Most High against the powers of darkness. God is asked to send down his angels (*adsint angeli pacis*) that they may hover about the house and bedside of the sick man struggling with death, and keep off the attacks of the infernal spirits attempting to snatch away a human soul approaching towards the end of its earthly career. These orations should not be omitted except in case of urgent necessity. Always say them slowly and distinctly with devotion and expression. The crosses at the words *Benedic nostrae conversationi*, etc., should be made by the priest over the place in front of him without being directed to any special object. The "Confiteor," which comes next after these orations, is to be said either by a server, if you have one,

or by the sick person, or you may say it yourself. Before you commence with the anointing you should urge the people who attend to recite some prayers, and, if possible, in a loud voice and alternately. The litanies, the Rosary, etc., will be most appropriate. "Antequam parochus incipiat ungere infirmum, moneat adstantes ut pro illo orent, et ubi commodum fuerit pro loco et tempore et adstantium numero vel qualitate recitent septem psalmos poenitentiales, cum litiis, vel alias preces, dum ipse Unctionis Sacramentum administrat." (Rit. Rom.) "There is no sacrament," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, "the administration of which is accompanied with more prayers; and for good reason, because then most particularly the faithful require the assistance of pious prayers, and therefore all who may be present, but the pastor in particular, should pour out their fervent aspirations to God in behalf of the sick person, most earnestly recommending his life and salvation to the divine mercy." The people being engaged in praying, the priest proceeds to perform the unctions. He dips his thumb in the vessel of oil, pressing not the nail, but the fleshy part on the cotton, by which the oil is absorbed, and makes with it the sign of the cross on the several parts of the body, pronouncing at the same time the words of the form as the rubrics direct. The single unctions must be performed on the divers senses and organs. *Ad oculos*—The eyes should be closed. The oil is applied to the eye-lids (super palpebras) and the words of the form are distributed so that you will have made the cross on the right eye-lid when you pronounce the word *unctionem*, and on the left eye-lid before you have completed the remaining words. *Ad aures*—The ears are to be anointed on the lobes or lower extremities, first of the right, then of the left ear. *Ad nares*—Two unctions are required, one for each of the nostrils. *Ad os*—Here there is but one unction by which both lips are anointed together, the mouth being firmly closed. But if the sick man has a difficulty in breathing,

it is enough to apply the unction to the upper or under lip alone. *Ad manus*—Anoint the inside part of the hand, the palm (exceptis sacerdotibus) first of the right, then of the left hand. *Ad pedes*—The proper way seems to be to anoint the upper part of the feet, not the sole. The unction *ad lumbos* in America, by legal custom, is not performed at all, neither with men nor with women. Having completed the unctions, the priest puts the vessel of holy oil on the table, rubs his thumb and fingers that have touched the oil with a few crumbs of bread, washes his hands, dries them with a towel, and proceeds with the “Kyrie eleison,” etc. In the following prayers, again three in number, God’s mercy is invoked particularly for bodily relief. They being ended, you put the vessel of oil into its case or cover, have the crumbs of bread, the cotton, the water in which you have washed your hands, thrown into the fire. Whenever a person is almost breathing his last, and there be danger that you may not get through with the whole ceremony, you may shorten it not only by omitting the orations, but also by condensing the formula. Say only “Per istam sanctam unctionem et suam piissimam misericordiam indulgeat tibi Dominus quidquid deliquisti per visum, per auditum, per odoratum, per gustum et locutionem, per tactum, per gressum. Amen.”—anointing the single organs corresponding with the words expressed. However, if the sick person survives, you ought to repeat the formula in the usual way, but conditionally, because the condensed form is valid only *probabiliter*. Note: As you may expect a sick call almost any time, day or night, have the necessary requisites, a light cassock, surplice, stole, ritual, etc., stored up well in a box or small valise within the sacristy. We would advise to take along also a crucifix, wax candles, and a bottle with holy water unless you are sure you will find these things at the house whither you go. Before and after the Viaticum, likewise before and after Extreme Unction, it is

proper to say a short prayer in the vernacular. Therefore take a book with you for this purpose; we recommend the "Vade mecum ad infirmos" (B. Herder, St. Louis).

C—THE APOSTOLIC BENEDICTION OR PAPAL INDULGENCE.

182. When the terrible moment of death is drawing nigh, and with it the judgment that awaits us, the Church, as a loving mother, opens for us all the treasures of grace which are at her disposal. Our soul is not only cleansed from sin by the last Sacraments, but an Apostolic Benediction is bestowed upon us, and through it a plenary indulgence, thus to destroy the remainder of sin, *i. e.*, temporal punishment. Bishops are wont to receive from the Holy See the privilege of imparting this Apostolic Benediction, and they, in their turn, may communicate it to priests under their jurisdiction as they deem fit. It is not contained *eo ipso* in the faculty which authorizes a priest to hear confessions; therefore examine well the document setting forth your divers faculties so as to see whether you are entitled to give the Papal Benediction to the dying.

183. This indulgence is actually gained "in articulo mortis," that is to say, in the very last moment of life, but it may be applied long before whenever there is real danger of death, or whenever Extreme Unction is lawfully administered. Usually it is given after a person has been anointed and but once in the same sickness. The conditions absolutely required are the following: The priest vested in surplice and stole (*violacei coloris*) must read that formula which the ritual contains, the so-called "formula Benedictina" introduced by Pope Benedict XIV. But before you commence reading, instruct the sick person as to the nature of this indulgence; then excite him to a true sorrow for his sins and inspire him with sentiments of fervent love of God and perfect resignation to His Holy Will, so as to accept death from His Hand in punishment for his sins. "Hoc enim praecepit opus in hujusmodi



articulo constitutis imponimus, quo se ad indulgentiae plenariae fructum consequendum praeparent atque disponant" (Benedictus XIV. in bulla "Pia Mater"). It is essential, in order to gain the indulgence, that the sick person invoke the Name of Jesus either orally if he can or at least mentally. (cf. Lehmuhl. theol. mor. II. vol. n. 564). The Confiteor must not be omitted though it may have been recited shortly before during the administration of Extreme Unction. Only when there is no time to be lost, the person just about expiring, you may shorten the formula by commencing with the words: "Dominus Noster, Jesus Christus," etc.

184. If, after the last rites have been performed, the sick person falls into agony, the priest must not leave the house, but stay there until the dying man has breathed his very last. Likewise, if you are called once more by the friends and relatives to the bedside of the sick person to whom you have given all the Sacraments before, but who is now about expiring, go without delay, and assist the poor sufferer wrestling with death in the best way possible. The minister of God should not stand idle when the devil is laying his wicked snares, pressing the dying man with all sorts of temptations and throwing him into despair. Therefore read the prayers as they are found in the "Commendatio Animae" of the ritual, sprinkle the sick party with Holy Water; absolve him again if he be conscious and desires absolution; say with a loud voice the Acts of Faith, Hope, Love, and Contrition; invoke the Name of Jesus when he closes his eyes and draws his last breath. After the soul has departed, recite the prayer "Subvenite Sancti Dei," etc. (cf. Ritual Rom. "In expiratione").

## ARTICLE III.

## CHRISTIAN BURIAL.

185. The Catholic Church is not satisfied with simply leading her dying members to the threshold of eternity. The wonderful bond of charity remains unbroken and extends also beyond this visible world. Not even the body is forgotten. That body, now a stiff, lifeless corpse, had shared in the great struggle the soul endured; it had been sanctified and made the temple of the Holy Ghost through the various Sacraments which the dead man had received during lifetime. And this body, thus we firmly hope, will be restored to life again and be made partaker of that glory which the soul is enriched with in heaven. Shall it therefore be thrown away like a dry branch, which has fallen from a tree, or like the carcass of a dead animal? By no means. "*Corpus defuncti de more honesto compositum loco decenti cum lumine collocetur; ac parva crux supra pectus inter manus defuncti ponatur, aut ubi crux desit, manus in modum crucis componantur, interdumque aspergatur aqua benedicta et interim donec efferatur, qui adsunt, sive sacerdotes sive alii, orabunt pro defuncto.*" (Rit. Rom.)

186. Catholics must not allow themselves to be misled by the spirit of the age in burying their dead after the fashion of worldlings or of skeptics and infidels. These latter often display a great pomp at funerals. Not only do they overload the coffin with flowers and wreaths, but they also hire a large number of elegant carriages for the funeral train and erect costly monuments on the graves. Warn your people against such abuses. The Church wants us to look at death in a true light, as something mournful, sad and momentous, as a just punishment for sin. Flowers, therefore, are out of place on the coffin of a deceased adult, or at least they should be made use of but sparingly. It is different with infants that have

died in baptismal innocence. "Cum infans vel puer baptizatus defunctus fuerit ante usum rationis, induitur juxta aetatem et imponitur ei corona de floribus seu de herbis aromaticis et odoriferis in signum integritatis carnis et virginitatis." (Rit. Rom. Exsequ. Parvulorum.) Let the people understand that if they wish to honor their dead, they ought to do this not by external show, but by prayer, just as the funeral rite of the Catholic Church suggests. According to this rite the corpse should be carried first to the House of God and a Requiem Mass be said "praesente cadavere." After it, the body is blessed and then brought to the grave yard, accompanied by the clergy and the friends and relatives, praying or singing mournful tones on the way. Before it is interred, the last and farewell blessing is given to it, according to the ritual. It may be asked whether it is proper to have a sermon at the occasion. The funeral rite does not seem to encourage such a sermon; still there is no universal law forbidding it. However, if you choose to preach, beware of simply eulogizing the dead person, and of using phrases that are just as untrue as they are ridiculous. Cardinal Gibbons says on this point: "In the presence of the Angel of Death, the human heart is profoundly moved by the solemn voice of religion, the scoffer is awed to silence and sectarian prejudice is softened and subdued. Some well chosen remarks on the brevity and uncertainty of human life, the never-ending duration of eternity, on the vanity of all things earthly, on the immortality of the soul, and on man's moral accountability to his Maker, will then appeal to the conscience more forcibly than at other times. It is also a suitable occasion for alluding to the intermediate state in the life to come and to the Catholic practice of praying for the dead. This consoling doctrine is at once suggestive of the soul's survival beyond the tomb and of the hallowed communion of prayer subsisting between the living and the deceased. ("Ambassador of Christ").

187. A Catholic ought to be buried, if ever possible,

in a Catholic cemetery; this means on a ground that has been blessed solemnly and in which none others but Catholics are buried. The bishop has the same jurisdiction over the cemeteries of his diocese that he has over the churches thereof. Though civil governments may for sanitary motives legislate as to cemeteries in relation to their distance from cities and towns and to the depth of graves, in which things they may be obeyed, they have no more right to interfere with the religious character of our cemeteries or with the burial of our dead, than they have to interfere with the religious character of our churches or our divine service. As it is of obligation for the bishop and the clergy to see that churches, the assembly places of worship for the living, be dedicated and set aside for the service of God exclusively, so also, when practicable, they ought to see that the resting places of the dead be blessed and set aside for this purpose exclusively. For city parishes, it may be best to combine and have one or more cemeteries attached to several or all parishes. Usually in this case the cemetery will be situated a few miles out of town. In country missions throughout the United States, Catholics will find no trouble in having the cemetery close by the church. This, indeed, is the proper mode and one which is in full accordance with Christian tradition. Both the living and the dead are of the same spiritual household. Therefore, let them ever remain in close union. Let the living pray for their deceased brethren when they come to church, and let the dead have a share in the graces awarded to the living. Next to the church, nothing should be so dear and such a hallowed spot to the members of a Catholic congregation than the cemetery. If possible, it ought to be consecrated,\* but as long as this was not done or cannot be done, you ought to

\* A written or printed document stating the particulars of the consecration,—date, by whom, etc.,—should be made out and preserved well in the archives of the parish.

bless each grave at the time of interment by the small formula contained in the ritual. The cemetery, being a holy place, must be preserved in good condition. It should be enclosed by a high fence of durable material and the enclosure must be so tight that no small animals, such as pigs, dogs, etc., can get through it. It must be looked after from time to time, and if it or the gates thereof be broken or otherwise injured, they must be repaired without delay, the same as if doors or windows of the church were broken or damaged. The ground ought to be kept as clear as possible from rubbish, sticks, sweepings, weeds, piles of wood or stone, and all other unsightly objects. The paths should be clean and neat, the head-stones erect and the mounds tidily sodded. Vegetables and fruit trees are out of place there, but shrubs and shade trees, such as evergreens, maple and pine, are not improper. Grass and weeds which grow on the ground should be cut down and burnt on the spot, or be carried out. Do not allow cows, sheep, and other animals to enter the cemetery and to graze there, like in a common pasture. We believe that the hearse drawn by horses ought to be left outside the gate; let the coffin be placed on a bier and be carried by human hands to the place of interment. Local usage will determine the mode to be followed in the arrangement of the single graves. In many places it is customary to sell lots to private parties. This sale, however, ought to be a sale only for use; the deed should not convey the ownership of the lot, but simply grant a license of burial on such lot to the exclusion of others. Here we may also ask whether Catholics ever have a right to buy a lot in a public or Protestant grave yard, and bury their dead there, though there is a Catholic cemetery attached to their parish. As a rule, we must say they have no such right, yet, in consideration of certain difficulties which may exist in one place or another, the Fathers of the Council of Baltimore have made an allowance: "*Quum agitur de sepultura eorum, qui fuer-*

unt ad fidem conversi et quorum superstites acatholici fundum domesticum in alieno coemeterio habent, vel etiam de istis catholicis qui pariter ante legen latam (1853) proprium fundum habuerunt, vel certe sine ulla fraude post legem acquisierunt, declaramus in istis casibus licere ritus ecclesiasticos adhiberi, sive domi sive in ecclesia quotiescumque id ab episcopo ob graves rationes interdictum non fueritt" (Conc. Baltim. III., n. 318).

188. The funeral ceremony, which includes the public suffrages or liturgical prayers, the celebration of a Requiem Mass, and the interment in a consecrated ground is both a right and a privilege. As a right, it should not be withheld, unless it be evident that a person is not entitled to it; as a privilege, it should not be performed with those who are unworthy of it. The following, according to the Roman Ritual, ought to be excluded from Christian burial:

(a) Infidels, heretics, schismatics, and apostates.

(b) Those who were under public excommunication or interdict at the moment of death. This includes members of secret and forbidden societies, unless they had resigned such membership beforehand.

(c) Infants who have died without Baptism.

(d) Those who have committed willful suicide, except there be reason to presume that the act was done in a fit of insanity.

(e) Duelists, even if they have repented before death.

(f) All public sinners, *i. e.*, persons who openly and maliciously refused to receive the sacraments in their last moments, who have taken part in notorious crimes, such as murder, robbery, etc., who have lived in concubinage, or in an invalid marriage, who have allowed their children to be educated in heresy.

(g) Those who are known to have neglected their annual paschal Communion. In the United States of America, Christian burial could hardly be refused on this



account alone, because there are no canonical parishes and one may comply with his Easter duty in any church. Besides, people are frequently excused for just reasons. Therefore, unless such parties had ceased to attend church altogether and had not sent for the priest before death either, do not refuse them a Christian burial. Whenever there is a solid doubt as to whether you should perform the funeral service or not, first consult the bishop; if you have no time or chance to do so, be as lenient as you possibly can. On the other hand, if it is evident that the deceased person is not entitled to the absequies of the Catholic Church, be firm and stand by the sentence of Pope Leo the Great: "Nos quibus viventibus non communicavimus, mortuis communicare non possumus."

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## CHAPTER VI.

## THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS.

189. The Catholic priesthood is not as infidels and heretics are wont to believe, a merely human institution, the result of history, the product of a crafty scheme and daring imposition. Its origin is divine. It has been established by the Son of God Himself. "The priesthood and the Incarnation of Christ," to quote the words of Bishop Ullathorne, "constitute one sole and indivisible mystery. Not by His eternal generation from the Father is the Son of God a High Priest, but by His temporal generation in Mary, for His Priesthood is in His human nature, although united with the divine personality." The powers bestowed upon Himself our Blessed Redeemer conferred upon the Apostles. "Do this in commemoration of me," He said at the Last Supper, thus giving them power over His real body, that they may offer it as a sacrifice. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He said, "whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven," thus imparting upon them power over His mystical body. In these two powers the priesthood was complete. All other faculties, viz., to baptize, to preach, etc., are the natural outgrowth of the two powers. They should not become extinct with the death of the Apostles. As the Apostolate of the Church was to continue so also the apostolic powers. The medium through which this was and is still effected is the Sacrament of Holy Orders. "*Sacrificium et sacerdotium ita Dei ordinatione conjuncta sunt, ut utrumque in omni lege extiterit. Quum igitur in Novo Testamento sanctum Eucharistiae sacrificium visibile ex Domini institutione*"

catholica ecclesia acceperit, fateri etiam oportet, in ea novum esse visibile et externum sacerdotium, in quod vetus translatum est. Hoc autem ab eodem Domino Salvatore nostro institutum esse, atque apostolis eorumque successoribus in sacerdotio potestatem traditam consecrandi, offerendi et ministrandi corpus et sanguinem ejus, necnon et peccata dimittendi et retinendi sacrae litterae ostendunt et catholicae ecclesiae traditio semper docuit." (Conc. Trid., sess. XXIII., c. 1).

190. In speaking about the powers of the priesthood, we have to distinguish between the "potestas ordinis" and the "potestas jurisdictionis." Just as man consists of body and soul, the body being the external agent, the soul the internal life-giving principle, thus the Church of Christ is both a visible society in an external form and an invisible spiritual being. As a visible society, she is vested with jurisdiction over her members; as an invisible being, she possesses a life-giving ministry. Jurisdiction rests with the hierarchy with the Pope, as the head of the Church, and the bishops in their respective dioceses. This jurisdiction the bishop does not obtain through his episcopal consecration; it is conveyed to him by the authority of the Holy See, and in the apostolic brief appointing him and setting him as a ruler over a portion of Christ's vineyard. "No temporal sovereign or state can give this jurisdiction. It is not of earthly, but of heavenly creation. It is emphatically a power from God. The channel of its derivation is through the apostolate. Once clothed with it and invested with his mission, the bishop is the ruler of the churches, the custodian of God's law, the enforcer of ecclesiastical canons, the father of his clergy, the pastor of his people, the chief preacher of the Word of God to the flock, and the guide of souls. All other ministries are exercised in dependence of him." (Bishop Ullathorne, Ecclesiastical Discourses, page 103). A priest by his very ordination has no jurisdiction, but being called upon to coöperate with the bishop, the latter is supposed to com-

municate to him part of that power which he has obtained by his apostolic appointment. We say part of that power because the jurisdiction is two-fold, jurisdiction in "foro interno" and "in foro externo." The first kind, which is exercised mainly in the holy Tribunal of Penance, priests receive when they are authorized to hear confessions. In the latter kind, they are supposed to participate, to a certain extent, after the bishop has assigned to them a regular post as pastor or "rector ecclesiae." This jurisdiction is not perpetual; it may be limited or withdrawn for good reasons, especially in America, where there are no canonical parishes. Not so with the "potestas ordinis." It is received through the Sacrament of Holy Orders and, being attached to the indelible character this Sacrament imprints, it cannot be destroyed or taken away; only the use of it may be suspended. The ministerial act exercised, in spite of the suspension, will become sinful, without, however, losing its effect or forfeiting its validity. "*Potestas sacramentalis secundum suam essentiam remanet in homine qui per consecrationem eam est adeptus quamdiu vivit, sive in schisma sive in haeresim labatur. Tamen haeretici et schismatici usus istius potestatis amittunt, ita scilicet quod non liceat eis uti potestate sua, si tamen usi fuerint eorum potestas effectum habet in sacramentalibus. Potestas vero jurisdictionis non immobiliter adhaeret, unde in schismaticis et haereticis non manet, unde non possunt nec absolvere nec excommunicare nec indulgentias facere aut alias hujusmodi.*" (S. Thom. 2. 2. qu. 39. a. 3.)

191. Who may be raised to the dignity of the priesthood? The Apostle St. Paul (Hebr. v. 4) says: "Neither does any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was." The priesthood of the Catholic Church is not hereditary, not attached to one tribe or family, as was the case in ancient times among the Israelites; however, it does not follow either, that each and every one may embrace the ecclesiastical state and

assume that royal dignity with which the minister of God is vested. A special call, a divine vocation is required. Whosoever aspires to Holy Orders ought to examine himself carefully so as to see whether it be God's will that he shall serve Him in His sanctuary. "He who of himself," writes Bishop Abelly, "without inquiring whether he has a vocation or not, thrusts himself into the priesthood, will no doubt expose himself to the greatest danger of losing his soul, for he commits against the Holy Ghost that sin for which the Gospel says there is hardly or very rarely any pardon." But what are the marks that point to a vocation? Next to an internal strong desire or inclination we may say with St. Alphonsus ("Dignity and Duties of the Priest"), there are required purity of intention, science and talents, and a positive goodness of character. Purity of intention means you must not be impelled by ambition, personal interests, or worldly motives; your only aim ought to be the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Science and talent denote that amount of intellectual knowledge which enables you to act as a teacher of divine truth, for "*labia sacerdotis custodient scientiam et legem requirent ex ore ejus,*" says the prophet. (Mal. ii. 7). Positive goodness of character signifies: He who intends to ascend the altar must not only be free from sin, but must have also begun to walk in the path of perfection and have acquired a habit of virtue. The soil on which vocations to the ecclesiastical state ripen is the Christian home, and, in connection with it, the parochial school. Only those youths who, from the very dawn of their life, are surrounded by an atmosphere of faith and virtue, who constantly see before themselves the example of a pious mother and a faithful father, may be expected to soar for that state in which they shall be able to further the interests of religion to the utmost longings of their heart. Formerly ecclesiastical vocations in the United States were comparatively rare, too rare at least to fill all vacancies. The Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore still com-

plain of this fact in their pastoral letter. Thanks to the Lord a change for the better has taken place during the last twenty years. In many dioceses there is no longer a want of candidates. The number of seminaries and preparatory schools has also increased. Priests engaged in the sacred ministry ought to consider it their duty to foster vocations among their flocks. Let them select such boys or young men who give a fair promise that they may embrace the ecclesiastical state in future. Let them not shrink from making personal and pecuniary sacrifices for that purpose. The parents of these boys are often poor and unable to defray the expenses of their education. Therefore you will do a work of charity if you first prepare them a little by teaching them the rudiments of the various branches of science usually followed in colleges, particularly Latin. Again, help a student by paying for his tuition, his clothing, his books, etc.\* If he has no home where to spend his vacation, let him stay in your house or provide a place for him with some good family in your parish. Have a special eye upon his conduct, instruct and warn him if necessary. If you notice that subsequently he begins to change his mind, do not use pressure upon him, but let him have his own free choice. Father Granada justly said that vocation is the main wheel of our entire life. As in a clock, if the main wheel be spoiled, the entire clock is injured, so if a person err in his vocation, his whole life will be full of errors. Why increase the number of those unfortunate priests who have no vocation? America has furnished too many of these moral

\* At the provincial Seminary of St. Francis, in the archdiocese of Milwaukee, a society has been established under the name: League for the Support of Indigent Students. The society comprises as members only priests, particularly those who have passed their curriculum at the Salesianum. It is highly desirable that all who love to call this institution their Alma Mater, in grateful remembrance of the education they have received there in the past, would join this society.



wrecks. Do not give a student a good testimonial at the end of vacation unless you are perfectly sure as to his conduct. Listen to what St. Alphonsus says: "God will demand a terrible account of the parish priest who gives to persons aspiring to the priesthood a testimony of their having frequented the Sacraments and led exemplary lives, though they neglected the frequentation of the Sacraments and had given scandal rather than good example. Such priests, by these false attestations, render themselves guilty of all the sins that shall be afterwards committed by the bad priests who were ordained in consequence of these testimonials." (Dignity and Duty of the Priest, p. i., c. 10).

192. "Quos praeordinavit hos et justificavit; quos autem justificavit illos et glorificavit." (Rom. viii. 30). To vocation succeeds justification; to justification, the attainment of eternal glory. The grace received in the Sacrament of Holy Orders must not be allowed to lie dormant, or, what is still worse, to become extinct. Like a fountain-head, it ought to give forth a continual stream of spiritual life, ever new. In his introduction to a devout life, St. Francis declares: "Charity alone puts us into the perfect life. The three great means for acquiring charity are obedience, chastity, and poverty. Obedience consecrates our heart, chastity our body, and poverty our means to the love and service of God. These are the three branches of the spiritual cross, but all three rest on the fourth, which is humility. When these three virtues are vowed they put a man in a state of perfection. But to put us in perfection itself it is enough that we practise them. For between the state of perfection and perfection itself there is a great difference. And so we are all bound to practise these three virtues, although not all after the same manner." Many a newly ordained priest, animated by that holy zeal which he felt during his seminary life, may continue for a while in those wonted spiritual exercises so dear to him. But will it be so ever afterwards? Listen

to what Cardinal Manning says: "To a priest who enters for the first time upon the sacerdotal life, the first danger is the loss of supports, on which he has so long been resting in the seminary. As in the launching of a ship, when the stays are knocked out it goes down into the water thenceforth to depend upon its own stability, so the priest goes out from the seminary into the field of his work, and has henceforth to depend, under God, on his own steadfastness of will. The order, method, and division of time and of work; the sound of the bell from early morning through the day till the last toll at night; the example and mutual influence and friendship of companions in the same sacred life; and still more the mature counsel, and wise charity of superiors—all these things sustain the watchfulness and perseverance of ecclesiastical students until the day when, invested with the priesthood, they go out from the old familiar walls and the door is closed behind them. They are in the wide world secular as the apostles were—that is, in the world for the world's sake, not with it but at war with it; of all men the least secular, unless they become worldly and the salt lose its savor. Then they deserve the title in all its extent, and are seculars indeed. A priest coming out of a seminary needs fellowship and he often seeks it in society. He does not yet know the character of those about him or the reputation of the homes to which he is invited. Sometimes the best of people are least circumspect and most kindly importunate in their invitations. How shall a young and inexperienced mind hold out against these facilities and allurements to relaxation, unpunctuality, self-indulgence, and dissipation. The whole of a priest's life may be determined by his first outset." (Eternal Priesthood, c. VII.) Would to God that every priest whose original zeal has cooled were to bear in mind the words addressed by the Holy Ghost (Apoc. II. 4-5) to the Bishop of Ephesus: "I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first charity; be mindful therefore from whence

thou art fallen and do penance and do the first works; or else I will come to thee and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou do penance." Yes, we must return to our first love. "It is much to be regretted that the instructions and prayers that we hear at our ordination are not more deeply meditated on in after-life, for there we have the true sense of the Church upon the perfection demanded of ecclesiastics. The very initiation into the clerical life so closely resembles the initiation into religious life that their language is almost identical. It emphatically inculcates the abandonment of the secular life for a life devoted to God. Before investing with the clerical habit, the bishop prays for blessings on them who in God's name are going to have the sacred habit of religion put upon them, and whilst investing them he says: "The Lord clothe thee with the new man, who is created in justice and holiness of truth" (Bishop Ullathorne, *Eccles. Discourses*).

193. One remark we cannot well repress in concluding this chapter. It refers to the duty of gratitude. "Gratitude," to borrow the words of Cardinal Gibbons, "is a characteristic trait of ingenuous souls. The absence of this virtue is a mark of an ignoble nature. Now, to whom, after his parents, is the youth more indebted to than to the devoted teacher who has guided his steps through the paths of science and virtue. By no amount of pecuniary compensation can he adequately requite his teacher for the pleasures of the intellect, the imagination and the memory which he will enjoy in after years. Material food satiates once it is consumed; the intellectual banquet is a perennial joy to the soul. After students have drunk deep at the fountain of knowledge, and their minds have been matured by age and intercourse with men, their admiration for their teacher's learning may become somewhat tempered, but their gratitude for their teacher's self-sacrifice, forbearance, and kind indulgence grows with their growth

and ripens with their years" ("Ambassador of Christ."). And not only towards their teachers ought clergymen to cherish a feeling of gratitude, but towards all others who, either by prayer and advice, or by pecuniary and personal sacrifices, have been a helping hand to them. An occasional visit, a letter, a little present or souvenir will be welcomed as tokens of a grateful mind. Do not omit to assist your benefactors in your turn, if they should be in need, above all, pray for them and make a special memento for them whilst you offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

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## CHAPTER VII.

## THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

## ARTICLE I.

## THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE SACRAMENT.

194. His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII., in his Encyclical letter (*"Arcanum Divinae Sapientiae"* Feb. 10, 1880) declares: "Since matrimony has God for its author, and was from the beginning a certain foreshadowing of the Incarnation of the Son of God, it has been ever invested from the very beginning with a sacred and religious character, which cannot be regarded as accidental, but rather as something belonging to it and not received from man, but so imprinted by nature." These words of the learned Pontiff embody, in a nutshell as it were, the Catholic doctrine concerning matrimony. Do you wish to have a proof for this doctrine? Let us open the very first page of Holy Scripture. After God, thus we read, had created the first woman, he brought her to Adam and united them both in the marriage bond with these words: "Increase and multiply and fill the earth." Adam understood the sentence correctly, for he answered: "This now is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman because she was taken out from man." And God then added: "Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and cleave to his wife and they shall be two in one flesh." (Gen. ii. 23, 24). Who will deny, if he puts any belief

in Holy Writ, that the state of matrimony, resting on divine institution, is of the greatest importance? By means of it the propagation of the human race is secured, upon it depends the growth and welfare of states, it helps to support the Church by increasing her members, it procures happiness and contentment, temporal and eternal salvation to the individual. "The family is the unit of society, and marriage is the foundation of the family. On the family, and therefore on marriage, all existing human societies are based, and to derive the fundamental laws of marriage from the enactments of existing societies is to become involved in a vicious circle." (Watkins, "Holy Matrimony").

195. Marriage always possessed a sacred and religious character. Not only the Israelites, the chosen people of God, held this doctrine, but also among pagan nations of ancient times, and the barbarous heathen tribes of to-day it can be traced. However, was matrimony a sacrament from the very beginning? Here we must answer no. According to its original institution it was a holy union ordered by God for the propagation of the human race, but no sanctifying grace was attached to it. Nay, indeed the corruption of all flesh, which was the consequence of the first sin, subsequently played such havoc with the sexual appetite as to lead to the grossest errors and most degrading practices in regard to the conjugal relations of mankind. The source evidently had become polluted and with it the race that sprung forth from it. Marriage had lost almost entirely its original character; the religious ceremonies under which it was performed alone helped to preserve a dim idea of its holy nature; in reality there was, as a rule, little or no holiness in it. This state of things prevailed until the arrival of Christ Jesus, our Blessed Lord and Redeemer. He who had come down from heaven to rescue man from the abyss of misery into which he had fallen, has not only brought back matrimony to its original condition, but that he might



create to Himself a generation holy and undefiled, He has raised the conjugal contract to the dignity of a Sacrament. This is evident from the words of St. Paul. In his epistle to the Ephesians the Apostle of the Gentiles, to put marriage in the true light of Christian faith, makes use of a beautiful comparison taken from the union of Christ with his Church. "Husbands," he says, "love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church and delivered Himself up for it, that he might sanctify it" (c. v. 25, 26). And again: "Let women be subject to their husbands as the Lord, because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church" (c. v. 23, 22). Having clearly shown thus the exalted dignity inherent to marriage, the Apostle continues: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great Sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church." (v. 31, 32). How shall we interpret these words? Baptism is the door by which one enters into the Church. Never, therefore, can a Christian man and woman, or let us say a baptized pair, form a marital contract without receiving a Sacrament. Should anybody doubt about this, we refer him to the thirteenth proposition of the famous Syllabus. This proposition, which has been condemned by the late Pope Pius IX., reads: "A mere civil contract may, among Christians, constitute a true marriage, and it is false either that the marriage contract between Christians is always a Sacrament or that the contract is null if the Sacrament be excluded."

196. Civil government, misled by the current of modern thought, which denies the divine institution of marriage, has attempted to strip the marital contract of its sacramental character, to snatch it from the Church, and to treat it according to its own good pleasure. In the United States of America they have been but too successful in this regard. Though Catholics are at liberty to contract marriage before their own priests and according to the rites of their religion, yet there is no civil law forcing

them to do so. Add to this the frivolous way in which in almost every state of the Union the bond of marriage is treated by legislative bodies and judicial courts, the great facility with which a divorce from such bond may be obtained, and you will understand the danger to which Catholics are exposed. Pastors of souls should not omit often to instruct the faithful, lest they follow the lax opinions of the multitude to the great detriment of both individuals and society at large. "*Rectores animarum saepe moneant fideles, ne profanorum hominum errore abripiantur, qui pro negotio terreno tantum et saeculari matrimonium habent; iisque in memoriam revocent juxta doctrinam Ecclesiae rem esse sanctissimam, utpote sacramentum et signum, quo Christus suum erga Sponsam Ecclesiam amorem quodammodo adumbrare dignatus est.*" (Conc. Balt. iii., 125). Should a Catholic attempt to get divorced by a civil court, utterly neglecting the authority of the Church, he will do a great wrong. Still more so if, after a civil divorce has been granted, he would have the audacity to contract a new marriage whilst the former conjugal partner is yet alive. In this last case he would be "*eo ipso*" excommunicated. "*Ad haec crimina compescenda, poenam excommunicationis statuimus Ordinario reservatam ipso facto incurrendam ab eis qui postquam divortium civile obtinuerint, matrimonium ausi fuerint attentare.*" (Conc. Baltim. iii., n. 124.)

197. Christian marriage constituting a Sacrament comes under the sole control of ecclesiastical authority. The Catholic Church, true to her conservative character, has deemed it her duty to issue special laws by which the holiness of the conjugal alliance might be saved so much the better and abuses of human passion be prevented. "Natural likings and instincts," say the Fathers of the Third Council of Baltimore in their Pastoral letter, "have their own value and weight, but they ought not by themselves to be a decisive motive in so important a step as Christian marriage, nor are they a safe guarantee for the proper fulfilment of the high ends for which marriage was

ordained." There are quite a number of matrimonial impediments. Some of them only render the marriage contract sinful, others invalidate it altogether. Our space does not allow us to dwell upon them; we must refer our readers to books of canon law and moral, which give detailed explanations of them. Every pastor of souls ought to have an accurate knowledge of these impediments and sound a warning also to his people, occasionally instructing them both privately and publicly on this matter. Dispensation from strictly ecclesiastical impediments may often be obtained, but only when there is a just and canonical cause; and this cause ought to be so much the more weighty the more important the impediment is. Always keep this in mind and do not petition the bishop for a dispensation simply to please the whims of the parties.

198. The first step made towards a future marriage is the engagement or betrothal (in German, "Verlobung"). It constitutes a sort of preliminary trial. A man and woman must examine themselves earnestly and see whether their hearts are attached to each other closely enough so as to make them apt and happy consorts for the whole future of their lives. The engagement is a contract that binds in conscience and under mortal sin, but it is not an indissoluble contract, like matrimony itself. For grave causes the bond may be cut loose again and both parties be set free to marry others. But too many young people, we are sorry to say, look upon the sweet season of their betrothal with a worldly eye, with no serious thought of the sacredness of the alliance they are about to enter. They let their passions get loose and are not ashamed to commit the worst sins. A poor way indeed to prepare themselves for the reception of a holy sacrament. "Purity of life and affection, that has better and more lasting grounds than the impulse of passion, are the only proper dispositions for entering upon a state of life which death alone can change and which involves so many and import-

ant consequences for time and eternity." (Pastoral letter of the ii. Council of Balt.) There are some golden rules that cannot be impressed too much on the minds of the betrothed. First of all, let the young people have the blessing and consent of their parents. Secret engagements cannot lead but to criminal intimacy, to sin, and scandal. Again, the betrothal should not last too long and not be thought of when there is no prospect of a speedy marriage. This is the case when half-grown boys and girls going to high-school with their books under their arms, have their intrigues, write love letters, give one another presents, take lonely evening walks together, or when a young mechanic, a young clerk, a young farmer, begins a love affair, though he knows he shall not be able to marry until after several years. The fear of God is not in the hearts of these parties and their marriage, if it occur, will likely be a failure and bring shame and confusion, misery and calamity on their heads. During the season of engagement the betrothed must not omit to pray much. Prayer is necessary, both because otherwise they will not be able to resist the temptations of lust and because they are both to assume obligations of the severest character, which they cannot hope to fulfill except by an extraordinary grace. When the pious Tobias married Sara, he said to her: "Sara, arise and pray, and let us pray to God to-day, to-morrow and the next day, because for these three nights we are joined to God. For we are the children of saints and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God." So they both rose and prayed earnestly both together, that health might be given them. (Tobias, viii., 46). Last, but not least, the betrothed should receive the Sacraments frequently, often go to confession and appear at the communion railing. It is the duty of parents and pastors to give the young couple all necessary advice. A priest must not think that this matter is strictly private and that he has no right to meddle with it. The welfare of the whole congregation

depends on the manner in which marriages are formed. However, do not misunderstand us; your pastoral solicitude should be limited to checking and preventing evil. We deem it wrong for a priest to actually go so far as to make devices and to contrive engagements amongst the people of his congregation. Here we would rather say: Hands off. Only, if it be a serious case, intervene; for instance, if a girl of good standing were to marry a profligate, a drunkard, an infidel, etc.

## ARTICLE II.

### INSTRUCTION BEFORE MARRIAGE.

199. Since matrimony amongst Christians is a Sacrament, and the state of marriage a holy state, implying grave and important obligations, it is but proper for parties, when they are about to wed, to make themselves acquainted with what they have to do towards receiving the Sacrament worthily, and also with the duties which the new sphere of life then to be chosen will lay upon them. Pastors of souls are exhorted to examine the bridal parties to see whether they know everything as behooves them, and they should give them all the instruction which they need. "*Fidelium matrimoniis praemitti etiam deberet opportunum examen quo contrahentes de religione examinentur et instruantur.*" (Conc. Baltim. III., n. 125.) In a pastoral of the diocese of Ratisbon (Jan. 17, 1869), we read: "This fatherly instruction is of the utmost importance, and often it is the turning point for weal and woe of those about to be married, and must therefore be undertaken conscientiously and after constant invocation of the Holy Ghost."

The scrutiny referred to in these passages comprises four points: (*a*), inquiry about matrimonial impediments; (*b*), explanation of the nuptial rite; (*c*), examina-

tion in Christian Doctrine; (*d*), detailed information on the obligations of the marital state.

200. As far as the impediments are concerned, it may suffice to make an investigation about those which are common or of frequent occurrence (*consanguinitas, affinitas, cognatio spiritualis, honestas publica, ligamen, mixta religio, cultus disparitas*). Impediments that arise from crimes should not be publicly investigated. It is enough to tell the parties in a general way that there are impediments which are more or less infamous, and that they should answer sincerely when asked on this point in confession. "In actu confessionis" you must then make an inquiry with each penitent, but do it in a form that is not offensive. Should you happen to detect an impediment it will be necessary to postpone the banns, or suspend them if the publication has been commenced already, until a dispensation shall have been obtained. Do not awaken any hope in the parties that the dispensation will be certainly granted, because thus they may be tempted to carnal lust and frivolity.

201. "Admoneantur conjuges, ut antequam contrahant, sua peccata diligenter confiteantur et ad Ss. Eucharistiam atque ad Matrimonii Sacramentum suscipiendum pie accedant." (Rit. Rom.) Matrimony is a Sacrament of the living and must therefore be received in the state of grace; it would be a sacrilege for Catholics to get married whilst their conscience is loaded with mortal sin. The bridal couple ought to be exhorted to make a good confession by all means, and, if possible, they should go to confession some time, at least a few days, ahead of their wedding day. Then, if perchance some secret impediment should be discovered, it could be removed in due season. It is highly advisable for the parties to make a general confession, especially if they have not led a good life during the days of their betrothal, but given scandal to one another. This general confession should be made a week or two before the day of their espousals,



and be followed by a short confession on this day itself or the eve thereof. But is not this asking too much? We are quite aware of what some moralists say, namely, that there is no ecclesiastical law by which people could be compelled *sub gravi* to go to confession before marriage. This is true enough, but what about the divine and natural law? The illustrious Dr. Heis, the late Archbishop of Milwaukee, in his celebrated work, "De Matrimonio," answers the question as follows: "Animadvertendum est sponsos ad confessionem praemittendam (et pariter parochum ad eam ab eis exigendam) plerumque multo gravius teneri ex lege naturali et divina, in quantum scilicet matrimonium est unum ex Sacramentis vivorum ad quae licite et fructuose recipienda ex jure superiore requiritur status gratiae, qui quamvis per actum contritionis perfectae absolute loquendo procurari possit, hoc tamen modo vix unquam ab iis posse recuperari videtur, qui copiam confessarii habentes necnon admoniti ab Ecclesiae ministro ad confessionem nunc peragendam, temere huic admonitioni resistunt, siquidem contritio perfecta non remittit peccata mortalia seu hominem justificat, nisi cum voto confessionis, hoc autem votum in taliter Ecclesiae monito renitentibus ne implicate quidem potest supponi." We are confident that every clergyman who has experience in the matter, will indorse the doctrine here expressed and, as a rule, not join in marriage parties who have not gone to confession before. A pastor of souls should instruct the bridal couple also on the rites of marriage, explain the different ceremonies, prayers, etc., thus to impress them with a holy awe and respect for the sacred act.

202. It is self-evident that people, when about to marry, must know those articles or dogmas of faith which are to be believed "*fide explicita*" and "*necessitate medii*." However, this is not enough; they must be acquainted also with other matters which a Catholic is bound to know "*necessitate praecepti*." On this point Pope Benedict

XIV. says: "Ne parochus ad tertiam deveniat matrimonii denunciationem, nisi certo noverit, sponso principalia fidei nostrae mysteria didicisse et saltem Orationem Dominicam Salutationem angelicam, Symbolum Apostolorum et praecepta decalogi memoriae mandasse." One reason why an inquiry must be made as to whether the parties have a fundamental knowledge of religion, is because if they have not yet acquired it, they will never acquire it later, but remain in ignorance their whole life; another reason lies in the fact that it will be their duty afterwards to teach their offspring and give their children a thoroughly religious education, which is impossible unless they themselves be well versed in Christian doctrine. But what practical mode shall a pastor follow to ascertain whether or not the parties presenting themselves for marriage are sufficiently instructed? Here we must say, let prudence be your guide. Consider the age of the people, the locality in which they have been raised and in which they live now, the education which they have received, etc., and you will soon see how to go about it. Thus, for instance, if both parties have been brought up by good Catholic parents, if they have attended a Catholic parochial school in their early days, or if, at least, they have received a comparatively sound and good religious instruction at their first Communion, there being no reason, either, to suspect that they have forgotten a great deal, you may be satisfied with asking a few practical questions, for example, on Confession, on the Eucharist, on the precepts of the Church, etc. But do not ask them as if you were examining school children, lest you offend the parties; rather observe a kind of familiar and conversational tone, so that your questions occur almost imperceptibly. Sometimes, though, you meet with people who have not much of a Catholic education, who are very ignorant about matters of religion, who, in conversing with unbelievers, skeptics, heretics, and in the bustle of daily business, have forgotten even the little they had learned

when they were children, who perhaps have never gone to confession, who have not yet made their first Communion. These, of course, must be thoroughly instructed, just as is done with converts. When they are rather dull and slow in grasping at things, you should be as lenient as possible. Be satisfied with a "minimum;" give them some books if they can read, so as to supply the want, and exhort them to come regularly to the sermons and other public instructions.

203. The last, but not the least, matter to which the attention of the bridal couple must be called by the pastor are their future duties. Married people have duties towards each other, duties towards their offspring, duties towards the Church and society at large. They owe one another fidelity and love, which love is supposed to be not only a sensual affection, but a truly supernatural or Christian love, beautifully described by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians (I. 13, 4-8). They must bear with one another, help each other, console each other in spiritual and temporal distress, give an example of virtue to one another, and pray for each other. Tell them to banish from their hearts and homes any jealousy, which is so prejudicial to domestic peace. You cannot omit, either, in this connection, to make an allusion to the "*debitum conjugale*;" but do it in general terms, without touching upon particular points. Simply refer them to the words of the Apostle: "The wife hath not power over her body, but the husband. And in like manner the husband has not power over his own body, but the wife." (I. Cor. vii. 3, 4, 5.) Caution them against the widespread vice of onanism, and the monstrous crime of abortion. Warn them not to defile their wedlock by following the fashion of heathens and infidels by seeking only for the pleasures of the marital state, but avoiding its obligations. Let them understand that if their marriage be fruitful it is a blessing and not a curse, as modern sociologists assert. Referring to the obligations towards their offspring,

explain what is meant by the Catholic education which they must give their children. Instruct them in a short way on the necessity of Baptism, on private Baptism and the mode in which it should be administered even before birth (this last point may be better touched upon in confession). In particular, speak about the manner in which a mother must act towards her little ones; how she ought to make them learn their prayers in early infancy; how she ought to teach them the fundamental dogmas of Catholic faith; how and why children must be sent to a Catholic school whenever possible. Finally, as to the duties which they shall have towards the Church and society, let the bridal parties know that Christian families are the foundation of the commonwealth, the stock of which a good parish and congregation is formed. Remind them that if they wish to have the blessing of God on themselves, they must keep His commandments and those of His Church. The husband, the head of the family, ought to see especially to it that the Sunday be kept holy; the wife and mother should watch that fast and abstinence days be well observed.

204. When one of the parties is a non-Catholic, the instruction here marked out may be changed a little, but it must not be omitted entirely or given to the Catholic party alone. Protestants often have lax views about matrimony, and need quite an information on the duties incumbent on married people. In particular, tell them that there is no such a thing as divorce from the bond of marriage; that this union which they enter upon is a union for life. Sometimes you have to curtail the instruction because all must be done in a hurry and on short notice. Then do the best you can under the circumstances. As a rule, people wishing to marry should notify their pastor about a month ahead of the date set apart for the wedding; and the pastor at once should appoint the time when he will be ready to give them the necessary instruction. It ought to be as soon as possible, because only thus an oppor-

tunity is afforded to prepare the parties well for the coming event. Our advice to all young priests is to write down every point on which they intend to speak. We append ■ list of a few books which may be found serviceable:

"*Instructio Sponsorum Lingua Anglica Conscripta*,"  
B. Herder, St. Louis.

"*The Christian Mother*," Benziger Bros., New York.

"*A Sure Way to a Happy Marriage*," Benziger Bros.,  
New York.

"*The Christian Father*," Benziger Bros., New York.

Gassner, "*Unterricht Ueber die Ehe fuer Brautleute*,"  
Regensburg.

### ARTICLE III.

#### PROCLAMATION OF BANNS. THE NUPTIAL RITE.

205. A Catholic marriage is wont to be inaugurated by the proclamation of banns—that is to say, on three successive Sundays, or, if a holy day of obligation should occur in the meantime also on a holy day, the future marriage must be announced in the parish church to which the parties belong as regular members. The announcement is to be made during High Mass, or at least during the Mass at which the greater part of the people are supposed to be present. This law is very strict. A pastor omitting such publication entirely, or people getting married without it, would be guilty of a mortal sin. If the parties do not live both in the same parish, the banns must be published in each of the two parishes. Likewise, if they are new-comers, the proclamation must be made in the parish in which they live now and in the one from which they came, at least as long as they have not been away from it longer than a year. The bishop has the right to dispense with the banns for just reasons, but in order to omit them entirely the cause ought to be "*valde gravis*." The Ritual contains a special form

for the publication, which, as far as possible, ought to be followed in the vernacular tongue. O'Kane—"Notes on Rubrics"—gives the following translation: "Be it known to all here present that N— and N—(here you mention not only the Christian and surname, but also the names of the parents, and, in case of a widow, the name of the deceased husband), intend, with God's blessing, to be united in the holy state of matrimony. Wherefore, if anyone of you know that there is between them an impediment to prevent their marriage, we hereby admonish each and all of you that you are bound to make it known to us as soon as possible. This is the first (second or third) publication." If a dispensation from one or two publications has been granted this circumstance ought to be added; also if an impediment existing between the parties has been dispensed with.

206. We have said before that the marital contract as such always has the nature of a Sacrament when both parties are baptized. The ministers of the Sacrament are the candidates themselves, the groom giving the Sacrament to the bride, the bride to the groom. In order to avoid a profanation and a sacrilegious reception the Church has established certain rules and rites in connection with the celebration of marriages. Good Catholics wishing to have the blessing of God on their conjugal alliance ought to be careful to comply well with all ecclesiastical regulations, as they bind under sin. Thus there is a strict law requiring that a marriage be contracted before the "*parochus proprius*" and in presence of two witnesses. This "*parochus proprius*" is the pastor of that parish in which the parties have their homes (*domicilium* or *quasi domicilium*). If they do not belong to the same parish, they have their choice, though it is customary in this case to be joined in marriage by the rector of the



parish in which the bride resides.\* Clandestine marriages, *i. e.*, marriages contracted either entirely secretly, or at least not before one's own pastor, are strictly prohibited, and in those localities where the Tridentine decree "Tametsi" is in force these marriages are null and void. In the United States this decree has been published in but a few dioceses and parishes (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., Resp. VI). With the exception of these places, clandestine marriages are not invalid among us. Catholics, however, commit a mortal sin and are guilty of a grievous sacrilege by marrying before a civil magistrate, vulgo "Squire." Still worse would be their crime if they were to go to a Protestant minister. In this last case they would be excommunicated *ipso facto*. (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., n. 127.) There are also certain seasons—*tempora clausa*—during which marriages should not be performed, namely, from Ash Wednesday to Low Sunday, and from the first Sunday of Advent to the feast of the Epiphany. Though this refers only to solemn marriages and marriage festivities, yet the common opinion and feeling of Catholics in several countries, also in the United States, appears to be that no marriage should take place at such seasons at all. It is but proper for a priest to take regard of this popular feeling, lest he give scandal.

207. The nuptial rite ought to be performed in the church, not in a private house, except by special permission of the Ordinary. The proper time is in the morning. Evening marriages, fashionable as they may seem to certain people, are undoubtedly not in full accordance with ecclesiastical law and should be discountenanced. A zeal-

\* Whenever parties for just reasons desire to get married outside of their parish or even of their diocese, they must procure a written permission from their own pastor and also a sealed statement, that there is no legal impediment, that the banns have been published and that all other regulations have been complied with. Without such a certificate no priest is allowed to marry a couple coming from another place and asking his service.

ous priest will easily succeed in persuading parties to come in the morning and to have their wedlock sanctified by the Sacrifice of the Mass celebrated in connection with it. "Frequenter et gravibus verbis inculcent (Rectores animarum) pium illum et laudabilem Ecclesiae ritum, quo fideles non noctu sed Missae tempore cum benedictione nuptiali contrahunt. Qua ratione fidem suam Catholicam tacite profitentur et coram omnibus ostendunt quam alte ut decet, ac splendide de matrimonii sanctitate sentiant. Et hoc quidem non solum laude dignum sed fere necessarium videtur nostris hisce temporibus, quando nihil intentatum relinquunt religionis hostes, ut matrimonio omnis sanctitatis omnis sacramenti species, si fieri potest, adinatur et quasi merus civilis contractus aestimetur." (Conc. Baltim. III., n. 125.)

208. The practical mode to proceed in the performance of the nuptial rite may be summed up thus: Let us suppose that the banns have been duly published and all other previous requisites\* have been complied with, then the bridal parties will present themselves in the church on the day set apart, accompanied by their friends and relatives. A special place—a bench or kneeling desk—should be prepared for them in front of the altar. Here they will remain kneeling in silent devotion, until the priest shall arrive from the sacristy. The chosen witnesses ought to be close behind. The priest, if he is to celebrate Mass immediately afterwards, must put on all the vestments except the maniple, which he will take later. If Mass does not follow, he should be dressed only in a surplice and a white stole. Having ascended the altar, he will turn

\*If there should exist any state law prescribing certain formalities prior to marriage it ought to be observed. Though it may be only a penal law yet people and priest may get into trouble by failing to observe it. Thus, in several states of the Union the statute ordains that no marriage shall be solemnized except a licence had first been granted by the county court.

around towards the bridal parties, who will leave their place, followed by the witnesses, and approach the altar steps. Before beginning the ceremony, you may read a short instruction on the dignity of the Sacrament of Matrimony. (cf. *Excerpta Rit. Rom. Append.*) Then ask the bridegroom and bride successively: N—, wilt thou take N— here present for thy lawful wife (husband) according to the rite of our holy Mother the Church? To this question both will answer with an audible voice: "I will." Hereupon make them join their right hands and let them recite the words of the Ritual: "I, N— N—, take thee, N— N—, for my lawful wife (husband), to have and to hold from this forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part." This being done, you are directed to bless them by saying: "Ego conjungo vos in matrimonium. In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, Amen," and to sprinkle them with holy water. Then follows the blessing of the ring, which the groom will put on the left hand of the bride. The ceremony is concluded by several verses and responses and the prayer: "Respice, quaesumus Domine," etc. If Mass is not celebrated you will read the other instruction after the marriage ceremony. (cf. *Excerpta Rit. Rom. Append.*) Otherwise Mass will follow as usual and the instruction will be read before the last benediction. In this latter case the parties will return to their seats, whilst the witnesses withdraw to the body of the church. The Mass should be the "*Missa pro sponso et sponsa*" whenever the rubrics allow.\* The "*Pater Noster*" being finished, the celebrant removes a little to the Epistle side, turns

\* The Mass "*pro sponso et sponsa*" is a votive Mass without Gloria and Credo. It can be said on all days except on Sundays all holidays of obligation, all *festis I. and II. cl.*; during the octave of Epiphany and Pentecost, the Vigil of Pentecost, the octave day of Corpus Christi, and every day which excludes a *festum II. cl.* on these days you will take the *Missa diei cum commemoratione missae pro sponso et sponsa*.

around to the wedded pair, kneeling at the steps of the altar, and reads the solemn nuptial benediction as found in the Missal. This benediction cannot be imparted if the woman is a widow and has received it at a former wedding. Whenever the parties receive Holy Communion, which, as a rule, they should, they will come up to the altar a third time and the fourth and last time in order to get the last blessing. Before it, the celebrant will say the prayer of the Missal, "Deus Abraham," etc., then make a few apt remarks or read the instruction as found in the "Excerpta," sprinkle the parties with holy water—in forma crucis—and give benediction in the usual manner. After it the couple will return to their place and remain there for a while, until Mass is ended and they have made their thanksgiving. This then is the nuptial rite as established by the Church. No doubt, if everything is performed in the proper way, if all who are present show by their whole attitude that they appreciate the spiritual graces thus conferred, the ceremony cannot but be touching and will leave a lasting impression. The wedding day being a day of joy may be also celebrated by secular festivities. Care, however, should be taken to avoid all excesses. People sometimes invite their pastor to give them the honor of partaking in their feast at home. Should a priest accept the invitation? Here we say, follow your own judgment, and do what seems to be prudent under the circumstances. No general rule can be assigned, though it is wise for priests to keep away from banquets and worldly gatherings if they can help it.

#### ARTICLE IV.

##### MIXED MARRIAGES.

209. A mixed marriage, in the strict and canonical sense, means a marriage between a Catholic and a baptized heretic. The vulgar tongue, however, has enlarged the

term so as to denote any marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, the latter to include not only heretics, but also infidels, Jews, and pagans; in fact, all persons who have not been baptized. What is to be thought of these marriages? They are forbidden by divine and ecclesiastical law. A Catholic contracting such a marriage without a legitimate dispensation would commit a mortal sin, and if the non-Catholic had not been baptized, the marriage would be null and void on account of the *impedimentum cultus disparitatis*. (cf. Conc. Baltim. III. 130.) We must look upon mixed marriages as a great misfortune for the Church in America, and if some congregations, in spite of every exertion on the part of the priest, make no progress, show no zeal for the faith, manifest no spirit of sacrifices, simply drag along without activity and life, the cause of all this must be traced back largely to the many mixed marriages which exist in such congregations. There can be no real happiness and contentment in these conjugal alliances, because unity in the most important questions of life is wanting. Sad experience has proved in hundreds of cases, that a Catholic marrying a Protestant gradually loses his faith, or at least ceases to practice it. And what is wont to become of the children? With a few exceptions they are lost to the Church. How can they love religion and cherish an affection for the Catholic faith if they see their own parents divided upon this weighty subject, the father worshipping God in one way, the mother in another? Surely the Roman Pontiffs have been but right when they raised their voice against mixed marriages, condemning them in plain, unmistakeable terms, and warning Catholics not to join in wedlock with those who are not of their own spiritual household. Pope Clement XI. says: "The Church in truth abhors these marriages which exhibit deformity in them but little spirituality." The learned Benedict XIV., in an instruction sent to the Catholics of the Netherlands, calls mixed marriages 'detestable nuptials which

holy Mother Church has unceasingly condemned and interdicted.'

210. Since mixed marriages are fraught with immense evil, a priest having charge of souls must make every effort to prevent them. It is useless to wait until the Catholic party comes and declares that he or she is determined to marry a non-Catholic, and then to give a warning not to contract such a marriage. In almost every case like this it will be too late and you will simply talk to deaf ears. The evil must be checked long before and be nipped in the bud. As soon as you notice a sort of intimacy springing up between a Catholic young man or girl of your congregation with a non-Catholic, sound the warning. See the party personally and have a private talk on the matter. Urge the parents, in particular the mothers, to use their good influence in deterring their child from the fatal step. In confession arouse the conscience of the unfortunate young person who has been ensnared with a passionate attachment for a non-Catholic. If you know with moral certainty that in consideration of the particular disposition of the penitent and or on account of other circumstances the future mixed marriage shall have the worst effects, you must withhold absolution unless the penitent promise to give up the company of the non-Catholic. That company then is "*occasio proxima voluntaria*" of mortal sin. Do not listen to the foolish talk, such as: "But Father, it will break my heart," or "you have no idea how nice and well disposed that Protestant party is," or "we think so much of each other." Tell the young Catholic man or lady that this is but an illusion, that others have spoken and thought in the same way and have found out when it was too late, how much they had been deceived. Moreover, a zealous pastor ought to warn his whole congregation, in particular the younger portion thereof, against mixed marriages, by instructing them in due time and season



minutely of all points concerning these unholy alliances.\* Therefore, every year at least once, if necessary several times, preach a sermon on this subject. "Omnis opera in eo potius ponenda est, ut fideles a mixtis istis conjugiiis omnino deterreantur. Hortamur igitur animarum pastores ut semel saltem in anno, tempore praesertim Adventus vel Quadragesimae, gravi sermone greges sibi commissos mala, quae ex illis pullulant edoceant, simulque fidei pericula indicent quae tum sponso catholico tum proli suscipiendae imminet, gravissima ostendentes rationum momenta quibus permota Christi Ecclesia id genus nuptias acriter semper vetuerit, ac etiamnum vetet." (Conc. Baltim. II. n. 336.) Also, in the conferences which you may happen to give to the members of societies of young folks, touch upon this matter occasionally. Last, but not least, instruct your first communicants well about the laws of the Church in regard to mixed marriages and imprint upon the young souls a deep horror of them.† By so doing you will not stop the evil altogether, but you will hinder it considerably from spreading further.

211. But how must a priest act if he has not succeeded in his efforts to prevent a mixed marriage in a particular case? That the marriage may be legal, you must procure a dispensation from the impediment either "mixtae religionis" or "disparitatis cultus," just as the case may require. This dispensation, however, cannot be granted except under three conditions: First, the non-Catholic party must guarantee to his Catholic ally, free liberty of conscience and a free exercise of his religious

\* We refer our readers to Rev. Lambing's "Sermons on Mixed Marriages." In short but forcible language they treat the subject admirably.

† We are sorry to say that the Sacrament of matrimony is not wont to be explained much if any in catechetical instructions. We admit that it is rather a delicate matter; but you cannot allow children who are about to leave school to remain in utter ignorance of it.

duties; secondly, both must agree to have the whole offspring of their marriage brought up in the Catholic faith, and according to Catholic rules of education; thirdly, the Catholic party must promise to do his very best to win the non-Catholic over to the Catholic religion. The first and second pledge should, if possible, be given in writing, according to a standard formula, signed by the parties and two witnesses. One copy may be left with them as a constant monitor, the other ought to be kept with the records of marriages in the archives of the parish. The pledge must be made sincerely and without restriction. A pastor is bound to inquire about circumstances, and if, in his judgment, the word of the parties cannot be considered as good, if he is morally certain that, in spite of the promise made, the danger for the Catholic and especially for the future offspring, will yet be a "*periculum proximum*," he must not ask the Bishop for a dispensation; if he doubts, he may send in a full report and abide by the Ordinary's decision. Besides the conditions, a canonical cause is required such as are specified in canon law. Should there be another impediment, for instance, consanguinity, affinity, etc., it must be mentioned in the same letter in which a dispensation is asked for from the impediment of mixed religion, that a dispensation from the former may be obtained at the same time.

212. The rite of a mixed marriage differs substantially from that of a Catholic marriage. The Church, considering mixed marriages as "detestable alliances" that may simply be tolerated as a lesser evil, forbids the priest to perform any act which would seem to sanction the affair.\* Therefore, the banns are not published. The ceremony does not take place in the church, or even in the

\* That does not exonerate the Catholic party, however, from the duty of preparing himself for the nuptial celebration in a proper manner. In particular he is bound to go to confession beforehand and if possible, to receive Holy Communion.

sacristy, but it may be held in the priests' house or at the private dwelling of the parties. The pastor is directed to assist only as a witness "*ex officio*" with the two other witnesses. He is not allowed to wear a sacred vestment, such as surplice, stole, etc., nor to say any prayer nor to perform any liturgical act; you simply read the short instruction (cf. *Excerpta Rit. Rom.*), then ask the parties to express their marital consent, in the same way as is done at a Catholic marriage, whereupon you say: "By the authority committed to me, I pronounce you united in the bonds of matrimony." The ring is then given to the bride, but it is not blessed. At the end you may read another brief instruction (cf. *Excerpta*). "How different, alas," writes Father Lambing (*Sermons on Mixed Marriages*), "is the marriage of a Catholic with one who is not of the fold of Christ! No light burns as an emblem of their faith and love; their faith, alas, burns too faintly, and their love is sensual; the priest goes to the room where the marriage is to take place as he would go to transact any secular business. He stands before the unhappy couple merely as a witness, for he says no prayer, makes no sign of the Cross, sprinkles not a drop of Holy Water, does nothing that would savor in the least of religion. What could make a sadder impression on the mind of a child of God? A Christian burial service is more consoling, for there the Church bids adieu to the body of one of her children and that only for a time; here, she too often bids farewell to the soul for all eternity. And happy would it be for many a Catholic if it had been his funeral instead of his wedding day; for then he would have to answer for but one soul; now many souls may rise up in judgment against him." These words of the reverend author are hard but true, and it may be good to remind a Catholic of all this, thus to change his mind before it will be too late.

213. A zealous pastor ought not to lose sight of the wayward sheep of his flock, who has been so unfortunate as to marry a non-Catholic. "*Post celebratas autem*

mixtas nuptias, parochi gravi conscientiae onere se gravari sciant invigilandi ut promissae a conjugibus conditiones observentur et effectum sortiantur." (Conc. Baltim. III. n. 133.) Make it a point to keep up friendly relations not only with the Catholic, but also with the Protestant party. Especially have an eye upon the offspring, and see to it that the children be baptized in the Catholic Church and be sent to a Catholic school later on. By far the saddest case is that of a Catholic who, without dispensation, marries a Protestant before a civil magistrate, or, what is still worse, before a Protestant minister. Whenever such persons on their own accord seek a reconciliation with the Church, you must not refuse your help. If they are ready to comply with the conditions required, you may ask for a dispensation. If the contract has been null on account of an invalidating impediment, in particular that of "Cultus disparitas," they must renew their consent; if the marriage is valid, tell them that this is so and that there is no need of remarrying. In either case, however, they must repair the scandal after which the Catholic party may be admitted again to the Sacraments. Often, though, you will need a special faculty to absolve the penitent, because it is a reserved case. If the Catholic party does not come to see you, you must weigh all circumstances and then follow that mode of action which prudence will tell you. Sometimes it may be best to wait and not to urge a rectification of the marriage, at least if the latter be invalid. Sooner or later they may get divorced anyhow, and this will give you an opportunity to bring the Catholic party back to a sense of duty.

May 23<sup>rd</sup> Catechetical instruction in one class.

## APPENDIX.

## THE SACRAMENTALS.

## A—GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

214. Apart from the Sacraments there exist in the Catholic Church other sacred rites and liturgical acts by which grace is conferred. They are styled Sacramentals because they resemble the Sacraments externally, being like them, visible signs, producing a holy and supernatural effect. Substantially they differ from the Sacraments in more than one point. Thus, whilst the Sacraments have been established by Christ Himself, the Sacramentals have been instituted by ecclesiastical authority. Again, the Sacraments confer grace "*ex opere operato*," the Sacramentals are rendered effective "*ex opere operantis*." Last, but not least, the Sacraments can be applied only to human beings; the Sacramentals are applicable to man and nature, both animate and inanimate. Indeed, the main object which the Church aims at in the so-called Sacramentals is a purification and sanctification of nature. Originally the visible world in which we move was created for man that he might rule over it and make it subservient to his designs. As we read in Holy Scripture, God said: "Let us make man to our image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. I. 26.) However, man sinned, and in his sin the whole universe became involved. The elements which theretofore had submitted to human authority then arrayed themselves as hostile forces against their former master; and, what was still worse, they were turned into instruments of the powers of hell to be used by the latter in their wily intrigues which they brought to bear on mankind. "Cursed," said the Lord to Adam after his fall, "is the

earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life." The redemption of man, achieved by Christ, the Son of God, necessarily implied a restoration also of the universe by bringing it back to its original state of obedience and liberty. To this the Apostle St. Paul refers when he declares: "The expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of him that made it subject in hope; because the creature also itself shall be made free from the servitude of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." (Rom. viii., 19-21.) The individual man, that he may gain original justice and save his soul from eternal perdition, must make use of the Sacraments as so many vehicles, by which he shall obtain a share in the merits of his Redeemer; the material things in this visible world of ours are set free from the curse which has befallen them and are made subservient again to man by means of the Sacramentals. The Church, through her ministers, bishops and priests, applies the merits of Christ crucified to creation and thus makes it participate in the supernatural order, to which man has been raised. Looked upon in this light, the Sacramentals are far from being superstitious craft, as the enemies of our faith pretend; on the contrary, they are a great and wonderful order of sacred rites, to which pious Catholics often should have recourse.

215. The blessing imparted to persons and things through the various Sacramentals is either a simple benediction imploring God's grace and help, or it implies a consecration, setting the person or thing apart for the exclusive service of God. The first kind of Sacramentals are called "*Sacramentalia invocativa*," the latter "*Sacramentalia constitutiva*." Gardellini says: "*Invocativae benedictiones illae sunt quibus Dei benignitas invocatur, ut vel personis vel rebus pro benedictionis diversitate et vario rerum benedicendarum usu aliquid boni tribuat*



easque a malo vindicet, non tamen immutato eorum statu (for instance, the blessing of a house, the blessing of bread, fruit, etc.). Constitutivæ benedictiones illae vocantur, per quas personae vel res benedictae ad divinum cultum destinantur, et in statu permanenti rei sacrae constituuntur, ita ut receptum per benedictionem hunc statum amplius non immutent neque ad profanum statum aut usum redire possint aut profanae ullo modo considerari vel effici valeant (for instance, the blessing of a church, the blessing of sacerdotal vestments, etc.).

216. The power of applying Sacramentals is vested in the sacred ministry. In the rite of ordination for the priesthood the bishop, whilst anointing the hands of the candidate, says: "Consecrare et sanctificare digneris Domine manus istas per istam unctionem et nostram benedictionem. Amen. Ut quaecumque benedixerint benedicantur, et quaecumque consecraverint consecrentur et sanctificentur in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi." Though the "ordo sacerdotalis" furnishes the root out of which the power of blessing proceeds, yet the Church has deemed it wise to limit the faculties of simple priests by reserving certain benedictions to bishops, others to parish priests, others again to religious orders. Hence, the ritual appends the warning: "Noverit sacerdos quarum rerum benedictiones ad ipsum et quae ad episcopum suo jure pertineant, ne majoris dignitatis munera temere aut imperite unquam usurpet propria auctoritate." The bishop may delegate a priest to bless and consecrate in cases otherwise reserved, but this faculty of delegating is restricted again either by general law or by special instruction. In America priests, as a rule, are empowered to bless the sacred vestments used for divine service. This does not include the consecration of chalices or such blessings for which the holy oils are prescribed. The nuptial benediction and the blessing of baptismal water are functions reserved to parish priests. The various religious

orders also enjoy certain privileges, for instance, the erection of the Stations of the Cross, the imposing of scapulars, etc., which therefore must not be trespassed upon by the secular clergy or the members of a different order.

217. The Sacramentals come under the head of public worship; they are applied in the name of the Church, and in consequence of the power which the Divine Founder has left to her. Hence, no priest should think he may do about them as he please. You are bound to follow the special formula set apart for the divers benedictions just as the Ritual or Pontifical ordains. Do not omit words or change and mutilate them, because you would run the risk of forfeiting the effect and thus commit a fraud on the people. If no special formula has been assigned for the object which you intend to bless, you may take the "*Benedictio ad omnia*," or, if it be a place, the "*Benedictio loci*." Some blessings cannot be performed except in the church and at the altar;\* in this case you ought to be vested in surplice and stole either of the color of the day or of the color specially prescribed. For solemn blessings—for instance, of candles on the second day of February, you should put on the cope. The prayers are always said with joined hands, also the "*Dominus vobiscum*" and the "*Oremus*." Pronounce the words slowly and distinctly and make the sign of the Cross whenever the rubrics call for it, gracefully. In the end, as a rule, the things blessed are sprinkled with holy water three times or "*in forma crucis*." In some cases it is necessary also to incense them. The holy oils are used at consecrations, namely, of chalices, altar stones, etc.

218. The Sacramentals, as we have said before, produce their effect "*ex opere operantis*." This means the

\* The priest, during this function, stands at the Epistle side. The things to be blessed should be placed on a table close by, not on the mensa Altaris, except vestments and utensils destined for divine service.

Church "per modum impetrationis" asks God to bestow upon the faithful either directly whenever a blessing is imparted to a person, or indirectly by the use of blessed things that particular grace which the respective Sacramental calls for. Moreover, a Catholic wishing to receive such grace is requested personally to dispose himself for it. Above all, he must have faith in the sacred rite performed; yet so as to leave it to God's wisdom and Providence either to grant the favor sought for or to withhold it. It would be superstition to believe that the Sacramentals work like physical causes so as never to fail or with the same supernatural certainty as the Sacraments. It may be well occasionally to remind the people of this and thus to prevent false opinions. "Curent imprimis concionatores et animarum restores, ut harum rerum naturam, significationem rectumque usum fidelibus exponant ac saepius inculcent. Rudiores plebeculam etiam atque etiam moneant, ne rebus ipsis nimiam efficaciam tribuat neque eas caeca quadam et immodica fiducia servet et superstitiosa veneratione prosequatur, quasi ipsae per sese, sine pia mentis dispositione plurimum possent. Illos vere accerrime reprehendant, qui hujusmodi res sacras, ut ethnicis moris erat amuletorum quasi loco habent, quae ipsos etiam foedissimo vitiorum coeno involutos ab ira Dei et ultione praestent immunes." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 350.)

#### B—SPECIAL REMARKS.

219. Among the minor orders, prior to the order of the priesthood, received by clerics, there is one called the Order of Exorcists. What power do Exorcists receive? The Pontifical specifies this power in the prayer which the bishop is directed to recite at the occasion. It reads thus: "Deum Patrem Omnipotentem, fratres carissimi, supplices deprecemur, ut hos famulos suos benedicere dignetur in officium Exorcistarum; ut sint spirituales imperatores ad abjiciendos daemones de corporibus obsessis cum omni

*nequitia eorum multiformi.*" Exorcism is employed in the rite of Baptism, but especially in case of "possession." Christ Himself has expelled demons from the bodies of men and has authorized his Apostles to do the same. The possibility of the devil taking possession of a man's frame cannot be denied, though amongst persons who have been baptized occurrences of this kind are very rare. If ever they should happen a priest may make use of the power confided to him. The Ritual contains not only a special formula for this purpose but also a variety of rules which it would be well to keep in mind. Let no one be hasty in this affair nor go about it until he has obtained permission from the Ordinary.

220. Of all the Sacramentals, none is better known or more appreciated by pious people than Holy Water. Water has a conspicuous place in the order of nature as well as in the order of grace. It is a sort of life-giving element in both. "The Spirit of God moved over the waters," we read in the book of Genesis, to make the earth, which was then in a chaotic state, bring forth that variety of living organisms, in which it now abounds. Under the Old Law lustrations by water were prescribed in connection with divers sacrifices. In the New Testament, Christ Himself deigned to establish water as the matter for the Sacrament of Baptism, that Sacrament of regeneration by which spiritual life is infused into the soul. Shall we wonder if the Church lays special stress upon the use of Holy Water, so much, indeed, as to prescribe it for almost all blessings? "*Cum sacerdos aliquid benedicturus est, habeat ministrum cum vase aquae benedictae et aspergillo.*" (Rit. Rom.) The Fathers of the Council of Baltimore, adopting the words of an ancient author, say: "*Aquam sale conspersam populis benedicimus, ut ea cuncti aspersi sanctificentur et purificentur. Quod et omnibus sacerdotibus faciendum esse mandamus. Nam si cinis vitulae sanguine aspersus populum sanctificabat atque mundabat, multo magis aqua sale aspersa divinisque preci-*

bus sacrata populum sanctificat atque mundat. Et si sale asperso per Helisaeum prophetam sterilitas aquae sanata est, quanto magis divinis precibus sacratus sal sterilitatem rerum aufert humanarum et coinquinatos sanctificat atque mundat et purgat et cetera bona multiplicat et insidias diaboli avertit et a phantasmatum versutiis homines defendit." (Conc. Balt. II., n. 344.) It is customary, though not of strict obligation,\* to bless the water every Sunday and to sprinkle the people with it before High Mass during the so-called "Asperges." The rector of the church should see to it that there be at least one, if necessary, several Holy Water fonts at the entrance of the House of God, right near the door. Keep the font clean and neat. A little vessel with blessed water should be in every private dwelling. Teach the people how to use Holy Water and guard them against superstitious practices. "Postea possunt christifideles de ista aqua benedicta in vasculis suis accipere et secum deferre ad aspergendos aegros, domos, agros, vineas et alia, et ad eam habendam in cubiculis suis, ut ea quotidie et saepius aspergi possint." (Rit. Rom.)

221. Candles are blessed in a solemn manner on the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin (second of February). These candles must be wax candles. In many places people cannot buy them. If so, the pastor should procure a sufficient quantity from abroad. Do not get them from a Protestant or Jewish dealer, but from a

\* Schuech (Pastoral Theologie, 339), says that upon the question put by the Rev. Fagan, of Milwaukee, "cum multis in locis illius regionis mos invaluerit omittendi aspersionem aquae benedictae in Dominicis etiam ante Missam principalem vel parochialem non cantatam, quaeritur utrum haec consuetudo servari possit?" The Congr. of Rites answered (9, Dec., 1878.): "Benedictio de qua agitur praescripta tantum est ante Missam conventualem, quando haec celebratur cum cantu et ministris." Hence, a universal law prescribing the "Asperges" before high Mass in parochial churches on Sundays does not exist. Still, we believe the ceremony should not be omitted, because the people are so much used to it that the priest will certainly give scandal by the omission.

good Catholic firm that will warrant them to be genuine wax candles. The faithful should be induced to get on this day two blessed candles for each family, and also to donate some to the church. The blessed candle is a type of the God-Man Christ. The wax prepared by the bees aptly represents the pure human flesh taken from the spotless Virgin Mary; the wick symbolizes the soul of the Blessed Redeemer; the bright light typifies the divine nature. In divers churches and countries, also in the United States, it is customary to impart the blessing of St. Blase on the day following the feast of the Purification. It is done by means of two candles held in the form of a cross before a person's face so as to touch the chin (*tacto physico*). At the same time the short sentence of the Ritual must be pronounced, by which God is asked to preserve the respective person from all evil, especially from throat trouble.

222. Ash Wednesday receives its name from the ashes which are solemnly blessed on that day. The ashes, if possible, should be prepared by the burning of palm branches, blessed on Palm Sunday during the previous year. Lent, the season of mortification and penance, begins on Ash Wednesday. Ashes were a sign of penance in the Old Law. Christian penitents in the early ages adopted the same symbol. Thus, gradually throughout the whole Church, it became customary to inaugurate the season of Lent by the ceremony of the ashes. They are blessed at the altar before Mass. After the blessing, the celebrant, if there be only one priest, puts the ashes first on his own head; then he proceeds to perform the ceremony on the servers at the steps of the altar, and finally on the people at the railing. "*Si non adsit alius sacerdos, tunc cineribus in medio altaris positis, ipsemet celebrans genuflexus super suppedaneum facie ad altare conversa, sibi ipsi cineres imponit, nihil dicens, quasi a Christo illos recipiat. Et similiter eos distribuit stans aperto capite eos accipiendo inter pollicem et indicem dextrae manus, eosque*



spargendo in modum crucis juxta verticem capitis super capillos, qui apparent juxta frontis extremitatem." (De Herdt Liturgiae praxis.)

223. The palms are blessed on Palm Sunday. This is done in remembrance of the solemn entrance of Jesus into the City of Jerusalem, at which occasion the children of the Hebrews met their King and Saviour with palm branches in their hands. But there is also a mystical means in the ceremony, as is evident from the words used in the various prayers during the blessing. *Palmarum rami de mortis principe triumphos expectant—Surculi olivarum spiritualem unctionem advenisse quodammodo clamant.* We are exhorted to live so that with the palm of victory in our hands we may share in the triumphant entry of Christ into heaven on the last day. The branches blessed should be green and fresh. Of late quite a number of Catholic firms in the United States have made it their business to supply priests and congregations with real palms that have been gathered in southern zones. These palms ought to be preferred to the branches of evergreens, cedar, etc., because they keep longer and make a finer appearance. The expenses are not high either, wherefore we advise you to procure them and send in your order in time. The people must be taught to preserve in good shape the palms which they take along to their homes. Tell them to put them in a conspicuous place and not allow them to get dirty. After the year has elapsed they should be burnt and not be thrown away like common rubbish.

224. The various articles destined for divine worship may always be blessed; for many this blessing is prescribed under penalty of sin. Thus a new church edifice cannot be used for permanent worship before it has been solemnly dedicated either by consecration or benediction. Even the corner-stone, after the foundation is finished, needs a blessing. That a cemetery should be blessed, we said before. A new parochial school house, a priests' house, a convent of sisters, a hospital, and all such like buildings,

should not be left without a blessing. Try to make these blessings a solemn festivity; invite the people and explain to them well the meaning of the sacred ceremony. In this connection we deem it right to add a few remarks about bells. Every church intended for the public should have at least one bell. Rectors and trustees ought to see that this bell be made of the right material or bell metal, namely, bronze. Steel and iron bells may be good for school houses, but they should not be bought for churches. Church bells are not only instruments to call the people to service; there is a deep mystery in them. By the variety of tone with which they sound they help to produce in those who hear them such a temper of mind as the respective occasions call for. They rejoice with the joyful; they mourn with the mournful. The Pontifical says that the bell should not be raised to its place in the belfry before it is consecrated. The consecration must be accomplished by the bishop; only in consequence of a special faculty, previously obtained from the Holy See, the bishop may delegate a priest to perform the act. The ceremony of blessing a bell is both detailed and imposing. It resembles somewhat the baptismal rite, hence the German expression, "Glockentaufe." First, seven psalms are sung or recited in the order as the Pontifical has arranged them; after it the bell is washed inside and outside with water that has been blessed for the purpose. Then the bishop anoints it, first with the oil of the sick (*oleum infirmorum*), next with holy chrism. This being done, a vessel with incense and other odoriferous spices is put under the bell so as to fill it with a holy perfume. In the end the assistant deacon reads a passage from the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke, in which reference is made to the "*unum necessarium*," spoken of by our Lord in His conversation with Martha and Mary. A consecrated bell, like other articles set apart for divine worship, must not be abused. Do not have your church bell rung in connection with political affairs or for any

other profane purpose. Make those who ring it handle it carefully. Let it sound well always before divine service, three times a day for the Angelus, on the eves of Sundays, and holydays, and at funerals. During the three last days of Holy Week, from the "Gloria" of Holy Thursday until the "Gloria" of the vigil of Easter, the church bell must be silent.

225. The Ritual contains many blessings for things of ordinary use. The food which people eat, the houses in which they live, the animals which they possess, the land which they cultivate, may be blessed. Even for the various modern inventions, such as railroads, telegraphs, electric light, the Church has set apart a special formula of benediction. The clergy ought to encourage the faithful to avail themselves well of the means of grace offered them; much spiritual and bodily evil may thus be averted or stopped. Avoid all sort of avarice and undue extortion; offer your service gratis, for such is the command of Christ: "Freely have you received, freely give." (Matth. 8.)

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## SECTION II.

MINISTRY OF TEACHING DIVINE TRUTH.  

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## PART I.

HOMILETICS.  

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## ARTICLE I.

## IMPORTANCE AND OBLIGATION OF PREACHING.

226. Our Blessed Lord and Redeemer, when sending out His disciples, that they might propagate His Kingdom here below, said: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth: going therefore, teach ye all nations." The teaching of divine truth has thus been laid down as an essential element of the apostolic office, as a right and duty inherent to the sacred ministry, it being the indispensable means for the spreading of Christianity, and for preserving the faith among the members of the Church. Scarcely had the Apostles, in obedience to the order which they had received from their Divine Master, commenced to announce the truths revealed to them, when their opponents, the elders of the Jewish synagogue, became alarmed. "They were cut to the heart and they thought to put them to death." This last radical measure was prevented only by the wise counsel of Gamaliel. Still, they had the disciples of the Nazarene, as they contemptuously called them, scourged. "And after they had scourged them, they

charged them that they should not speak at all in the Name of Jesus." But the Apostles were not deterred by such threats. "They ceased not in the temple and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus." (Acts V.) Would the powers of hell—for the Jewish elders were but their instruments—have resorted to such violent means if they had not keenly felt the immense influence attached to the preaching of the divine truth? Indeed, if the burning words of an orator, speaking on worldly matters, are able to electrify, as it were, the spirits of the hearers, shall the herald of the Gospel of God, bearing a message from Heaven, exercise less power in affecting the souls of those who happen to listen to him?

227. There is a vast difference between a speech and a sermon. Both are means by which we try to convey ideas to the minds of others; both are held to gain the good will of the hearers and to arouse their enthusiasm. However, whilst the speaker or lecturer has to rely solely upon his personal resources, upon the intrinsic weight of the arguments he proffers, and the manner in which he delivers his oration, the herald of the Gospel is invested with divine authority, at least as long as he really announces the word of God and does not degrade the pulpit by idle talk and improper discussions. "When the priest ascends the altar to preach he is looked upon not as an ordinary man, but as the oracle of Christ. He can address his congregation in the language of the Apostle: When you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the word of God. He is, therefore, listened to with a respectful attention and reverence rarely paid to a public speaker." (Card. Gibbons, "Ambassador of Christ.")

228. All clergymen who have charge of souls are obliged frequently to preach and to expound to their flocks the truths of religion. "Preach the word," writes St. Paul to Timothy; "be instant in season out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke, in all patience and doctrine."

In the early ages of Christianity it was customary to have a sermon or solemn religious discourse inserted as an integral part into the celebration of the Divine Mysteries. It was held during the so-called "missa catechumenorum" which now forms the first part of the Mass, the part preceding the Offertory, whence dates the practice still in vogue of delivering a sermon after the Gospel. A zealous pastor needs no admonition to preach to his flock. He will labor with all diligence in bringing Christian truth and the maxims embodied in the revealed law of God home to the minds of the people. Beholding the tide of wickedness making terrible inroads on the ranks of the faithful, the many dangers arising from the secular press, from secret societies, from heretics, and last, but not least, from impious Catholics, he cannot hold his peace, but feels the necessity of opposing the torrent of evil which sweeps along, causing great disaster. Great interests are at stake, God's honor, man's immortal soul, the salvation of society. Will the shepherd lie asleep and keep quiet whilst the wild beasts of the forest are breaking into his fold, devouring the sheep by the hundreds? Indeed not, and should it cost his own life, should the enemies raise ever so much of a warcry against him, he will not be silenced. Even the apparently little success which his work of preaching may have, does not deter him. In this case he will remember the words spoken by God to the prophet: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel, and thou shalt hear the word out of my mouth and shalt tell it to them from Me. If, when I say to the wicked: Thou shalt surely die, thou declare it not to him, nor speak to him that he may be converted from his wicked way and live; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but I will require his blood at thy hand. But if thou give warning to the wicked, and he be not converted from his wickedness, he, indeed, shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul." (Ezech. iii., 17-19.)

229. How often shall rectors of parishes preach?



Under ordinary circumstances they are bound to deliver a regular sermon to their parishioners every Sunday and holyday of obligation throughout the whole year. This is evident from the words of the Council of Trent: "*Quia vero christianae reipublicae non minus necessaria est praedicatio evangelii quam lectio et hoc est praecipuum episcoporum munus: statuit et decrevit eadem sancta synodus omnes episcopos, archiepiscopos, primates et omnes alios ecclesiarum praelatos teneri per se ipsos si legitimi impediti non fuerint, ad praedicandum sanctum Jesu Christi evangelium. Archipresbyteri quoque, plebani, et quicumque parochiales vel alias curam animarum habentes ecclesias, quocumque modo obtinent, per se vel alios idoneos si legitime impediti fuerint diebus saltem dominicis et festis solemnibus plebes sibi commissas pro sua et earum capacitate pascant salutaribus verbis: docendo quae scire omnibus necessarium est ad salutem annunciandoque eis cum brevitate et facilitate sermonis vitia quae eos declinare et virtutes quas setari oporteat ut poenam aeternam evadere et coelestem gloriam consequi valeant.*" (Conc. Trid. sess. V., c. 2.) St. Alphonsus, commenting on this decree, says: "*Doctores affirmant graviter peccare parochum qui per mensem continuum aut per tres menses discontinuos concionari omittit.*" Some priests in the United States, it seems, had the bad custom of suspending preaching entirely during the summer season, after the fashion of Protestant ministers, who then go on a vacation tour, closing up their meeting-houses for a couple of months. The Fathers of the Third Council of Baltimore have forbidden it; moreover, lest people who go to an early Mass throughout the whole year be left without instruction about their religion, the Fathers of the same Council enjoin upon all pastors the duty of having a short sermon preached at all the Masses on Sundays beside the High Mass. "*Fertur quod maximo cum dolore audivimus non paucis in locis plerosque fideles fere nunquam audire*

verbum Dei: siquidem necessitate coacti aut voluntate missis privatis assistunt Dominicis diebus inter quarum celebrationem ne una quidem vice toto anno pascuntur salutaribus verbis. Efficacibus remediis tanto malo occurrere cupientes praecepimus ut diebus dominicis et festis solemnibus etiam aestivo tempore omnes qui curam habent animarum, per se aut si legitime impediti fuerint per alios idoneos inter celebrationem omnium omnino missarum quibus adstant fideles sive illae missae sint cantatae sive privatae vel etiam valde mane celebrentur, Evangelium diei occurrentis lingua vernacula distincte legant atque si tempus patiatur per duodecimam horae partem populum in lege Domini erudiant omni consuetudine aut praetextu in contrarium non obstante. Quodsi quis obstinate neglexerit ab Ordinario severe puniatur. Sermo vero proprie dictus habeatur in Missa ultima quae apud nos missa communitalis sive parochialis reputatur." (Conc. Baltim. III. 216.) During Advent and Lent, not only on Sundays, but also on week days, at least once a week, a suitable discourse ought to be delivered. (cf. Conc. Baltim. II., 128.)

230. "Teach ye all nations," Christ said to His Apostles. The word of God therefore is not limited to tongue or nationality; it is independent of race and state boundaries. A striking illustration of this has been given by the Holy Ghost Himself on the first Pentecost. Though the Apostles spoke but their own Galilean idiom, they were understood by all who happened to be present. "Parthians and Medes," they said in astonishment, "and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, we have heard them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." Catholic missionaries, in attempting to convert barbarous tribes, have ever considered it their duty to make themselves acquainted with the language of the people amongst whom they were working. Just think of those devoted and zealous early Indian missionaries in our own country! They have

taken the utmost pains to learn not only one idiom, but a variety of dialects. In America there are still many mixed parishes, made up by people of different tongues, though they profess the same Catholic faith. A priest having charge of such a parish or mission must be just to all. If there be a considerable number of persons who are not enough versed in English as to understand an ordinary sermon, the word of God must be preached to them in their own tongue. The pastor not knowing it, must either learn it or else call upon other priests for the purpose of preaching in a particular language. "Omnibus omnia factus sum," St. Paul said; every clergyman should follow the apostolic example and not shrink from an inconvenience when the salvation of souls is at stake.

## ARTICLE II.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PREACHER.

231. The administration of the Sacraments and the preaching of the Divine Word are both functions of the sacred ministry, but they greatly differ in this that the Sacraments always have their effect, though the priest, who confers them may be far from being worthy to act as their functionary, whilst the effect of a sermon to a great extent depends on the personal qualities of the preacher. "*Dolendum quidem est, non semper e divini verbi praedicatione fructum illum et commoda derivari quae sibi proposuit concionator. Quod verbo divino ipsi vitio vertere nefas esset. Est enim sermo Dei vivus et efficax et penetrabilior omni gladio ancipiti. Neque id semper inscientiae auditorum aut pravitati et oscitantiae tribuendum. Conferenda plerumque est in ipsum concionatorem culpa qui suo muneri imparem se gerit. Quemadmodum enim gladius quamvis optimus quo miles ineptus utatur, parum valet ad hostem feriendum ac pellendum sic verbum Dei quan-*

tumvis per se efficax, inepti concionatoris ore prolatum vires amittit parumque aut nihil confert ad durissima impiorum hominum corda emollienda, convincenda ac corrigenda." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 135.)

232. No clergyman should dare ascend the pulpit unless he be duly authorized. Referring to the preaching done by our Lord, the Gospel says: "*Erat docens sicut potestatem habens et non sicut Scribae eorum et Pharisaei.*" (Matth. vii., 29.) The Son of God had received His mission from the Heavenly Father. The power thus conferred upon Himself He was pleased to communicate to His Apostles. Ever since it has been an established rule in the Church, that for the preaching of divine truth a so-called "*missio canonica*" is required. "*Nullus autem saecularis sive regularis etiam in ecclesia suorum ordinum contradicente episcopo praedicare praesumat.*" (Conc. Trid. sess. XXIV., c. 4.)

233. The herald of the Gospel must be a man of virtue. "*Pectus est quod disertos facit.*" Words which do not come from the heart cannot find an echo in the hearts of the audience. How can a man venture to proclaim truths which stand in glaring contradiction to his actual life? Will his hearers be moved? Will he strike their souls with terror? Will he make them hate sin and love virtue? Hardly ever, because they will at once respond "*Medice cura teipsum.*" To be a good musician you must not only know the theoretical rules of music, but be able to handle the instrument so as to lure forth from it harmonious sounds, and for this purpose you must be gifted with a musical ear. Thus, to preach divine truth with success, your very life must bear testimony to what your mouth utters, because life alone is able to produce life.—"*Cujus vita despicitur, restat ut ejus praedicatio contemnatur.*" (S. Greg. M.) The minister of God, when about to read the Gospel, is directed to pray: "*Munda cor meum et labia mea, Omnipotens Deus, qui labia Isaiae prophetae calculo mundasti ignito,*

ita me tua gratia dignare mundare, ut evangelium tuum digne valeam nuntiare." Pure must be the heart, pure the lips of him who acts as a living instrument of the Holy Ghost, as a messenger of heaven. The preacher of the Divine Word ought to suppress all thoughts of vain ambition or self-complaisance. Oh, how many sermons are wont to be without effect, because he who delivers them instead of seeking the honor of God, looks for his own glory! A truly humble man will produce wonders even by a sermon less elaborate in style or less accurate in gesture.

234. A clergyman desirous that his preaching shall bring forth an abundance of fruit, ought to be given to study. *Nolo te declamatorem esse sed mysteriorum peritum et Sacramentorum Dei tui eruditissimum.* (S. Hieron.) The truths which you preach upon must have been first well pondered; they must be stored up in your mind so as to constitute a sort of intellectual arsenal furnishing a variety of weapons wherewith you may attack the enemy at any time. The sources from which you should draw are the works of illustrious theologians of past ages, such as St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome, among the early Fathers; St. Thomas, St. Bonaventure, St. Bernard, among the scholastics; Father Suarez, St. Alphonsus, St. Francis of Sales, during the last centuries. Also the various modern authors should not be lost sight of. Three great cardinals, Wiseman, Manning, Newman — have largely contributed towards diffusing Catholic doctrine among English-speaking races. No Catholic priest familiar with the English tongue should omit to read at least some of the works which these great writers have left us. Above all, however, if you are ambitious to become a powerful pulpit-orator, betake yourself to the study of the Bible. In it you will find the divine word pure and genuine without any human admixture. "Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata utilis est ad docendum, ad arguendum, ad corripiendum, ad erudien-

dum in justitia." (Tim. iii., 16.) It is to be lamented, indeed, that in many sermons preached nowadays, you hear a great deal of modern sciences, quotations from poets and profane authors, even from the secular press, but no word borrowed from Holy Writ. Shall we wonder, then, if people listening to this kind of talk become worldly-minded? The tendency of the age is to minimize Catholic doctrine, to deny revelation and to extol humanity, to tear down the barriers set up by natural and divine law. How will a Catholic priest be able to stay this torrent of corruption? Perhaps by throwing himself into it and swimming with the current? A few have tried it, but they perished miserably. The only remedy is to return to that source from which a stream of sound doctrine is ever pouring forth, namely, Holy Scripture. Should any one doubt this, then we refer him to the golden words of his Holiness, Pope Leo XIII., in the famous encyclica, "*Providentissimus Deus*" (Nov. 18, 1893): "*Atque propria et singularis Scripturarum virtus a divino afflatu Spiritus Sancti profecta ea est quae oratori sacro auctoritatem addit, apostolicam praebet dicendi libertatem nervosam victricemque tribuit eloquentiam. Quisque enim divini verbi spiritum et robur loquendo refert, ille non loquitur in sermone tantum sed et in virtute et in Spiritu Sancto et in plenitudine multa. Quamobrem ii dicendi sunt praepostere improvideque facere qui ita conciones de religione habent et praecepta divina enuntiant, nihil ut fere afferant, nisi humanae scientiae et prudentiae verba, suis magis quam divinis argumentis innixi. Istorum scilicet orationem quantumvis nitentem luminibus languescere et frigere necesse est, utpote quae igne careat sermonis Dei, eandemque longe abesse ab ea qua divinus sermo pollet virtute; vivus est enim sermo Dei et efficax et penetrabilior omni gladio ancipiti et pertingens usque ad divisionem animae et spiritus.*"

235. That your preaching may be rendered successful you ought to be a man of prayer. "In meditatione



mea exardescet ignis," says the Psalmist. Those great and saintly heralds of the Gospel in foregone ages, who succeeded in carrying large multitudes by the power of their speech, have been lovers of prayer. In the silent hours which they had spent in conversation with God, their hearts had been filled with that burning charity and zeal which shone on the face when they ascended the pulpit. Their ideal in this regard was none less than Christ Himself. There is a deep meaning in what the Gospel says: "Jesus having dismissed the multitude, went up into a mountain alone to pray." In the stillness of the night, when every voice was hushed and the people lay asleep in their homes, the Son of God kept awake. His human soul then was absorbed in profound meditation; it was permitted to cast a look into the abyss of the Godhead; a clear perception of the infinite wisdom, goodness, justice and mercy began to dawn upon it; it then fully realized the evil contained in sin, and the misery caused through it; a holy zeal to sacrifice Himself for His brethren was the result, and this zeal was wont to lend such a wonderful unction to the discourses held the next day before the public. Let a priest be devoted to prayer and meditation, he will then not be at a loss as to what he shall say to his people, he will not experience any difficulty in finding a suitable subject, in getting the right ideas and the proper words. His mouth will overflow with what his heart abounds in. Like a night's dew refreshes the plants and flowers, which had been writhing under the burning sun of the day, thus a Sunday sermon which the pastor has first been meditating on himself, will cheer up the drooping hearts of the people. "No one who has not put it to practical experience can understand how the mind advances in the light of truth, when prayer is mingled with study and when the understanding makes frequent ascents to God as the author of light and truth and the first cause of knowledge. When we think in God we are on the side of truth; thought itself becomes a kind of

prayer and God increases our light. What made a St. Augustine, a St. Bernard, a St. Thomas, a St. Bonaventure, and all these holy and luminous doctors of the Church? They prayed almost as much as they thought, and their thinking was a kind of prayer, because they thought in God the Father of lights and the Word of Truth under the movement of the Spirit of the living God helped their infirmity. This habit shines forth in their writings as in their lives, and their maxims, even when transplanted from their minds into ours, have in them a grace and profundity of inexhaustible truth that illuminates so many things." (Ullathorne, Ecclesiastical Discourses, p. 173.)

### ARTICLE III.

#### THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF SERMONS.

236. Sermons are delivered to the end that the people may have a knowledge of all that pertains to their eternal salvation, and that they may act according to this knowledge. The subject-matter, therefore, comprises the whole Christian doctrine. "*Docentes eos servare quaecumque mandavi vobis,*" Christ said to His Apostles. And the Roman Catechism observes: "*In eo praeique ecclesiastici doctoris opera servabitur, ut fideles scire ex animo cupiant Jesum Christum et hunc crucifixum; sibi que certo persuadeant atque intima cordis pietate et religione credant, aliud nomen non esse datum hominibus, in quo oporteat nos salvos fieri.*" A pastor is bound to preach often on those dogmas of faith which every Christian should know well, either "*necessitate medii,*" or "*necessitate praecepti,*" namely, upon the mystery of the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation, upon the necessity of grace, upon the Sacraments, upon the true Church, upon the necessity and the manner of prayer, upon the four last things. He must likewise make his flock acquainted with

the commandments of the Decalogue and the precepts of the Church. The sacred Liturgy should also be brought within the grasp of their mind; the rubrics of the Mass, the ceremonies of Holy Week, the rites observed at the various blessings ought to be explained occasionally. In speaking on moral subjects, be not satisfied with thundering against vice and sin,\* but show the nature of the various virtues which people in our days but too often lose sight of, such as humility, obedience, justice, charity, chastity. The best rule will be to follow the Gospel of the respective Sunday, but to make the application of the text so as to treat on the whole Christian doctrine within a given time, for instance, two or three years. However, you may interrupt your order now and then to preach on the Blessed Virgin, on the Saints, on a particular Mystery, whenever a special Feast occurs. The Roman Catechism has an excellent plan for Sunday sermons. The Fathers of the Second Council of Baltimore justly say: "*Praestantissimum igitur hunc librum (Catechismum Romanum), concionator prae manibus habeat, saepiusque legendo ac meditando terat et ex eo tum optima et tutissima vitae christianae instituendae documenta, tum rerum tradendarum seriem hauriat. Qua ratione capita fidei catholicae ac morum integra et ordinata auditoribus suis explicabit. Nil tamen vetat quin ordinem hunc abrumperere aliquando liceat ad Deiparae ac coelitus laudes et exempla proponenda ad Christi patientis ac morientis historiam enarrandam aut ad alia dicenda quae festi dies aut Evangelii loca quae in sacris peragendis recitantur aut*

\* "Narration of vulgar or atrociously wicked occurrences, constantly thundering or threatening or punishing will blunt the finer sensibilities, whilst ■ mawkish sentimentality will cultivate effimancy among the hearers. Especially dangerous, however, are those subjects which are apt to draw the will of man into sin, for instance graphic descriptions of various vices, too plain a description of secret sins and of the excuses and means which sinners adopt."— (The Priest in the Pulpit).

alia temporis et rerum adjuncta suaserint." (Con. Balt. II., n. 133.)

237. Right in this connection we cannot help but warn our young ecclesiastics against certain abuses. The pulpit is both a public and a sacred place. Hence, all matters which concern only individual parties, or which are purely secular and profane, must be excluded from it. Carefully avoid speaking in a sermon about your personal grievances. Do not make the pulpit a platform of self-defense in thrusting upon the public silly tales brought to your ears by old women or cranky idiots. "Quodsi inter concionatorem et aliquos ex commisso sibi grege lites, simultates, jurgia forte extiterint ipse tamen rectene an perperam laesus fuerit, ad privatam injuriam ulciscendum sacro loco et tempore abuti nequaquam audeat." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 140.) If scandals have taken place and you deem it your duty to warn the people against them, then do this by a strict adherence "ad rem:" make no personal allusions, mention no name, nor add remarks apt to throw a slur on private parties. "In vitiis insectandis gravi quidem et quoties expedit acri sermone utatur. Neminem tamen adstantium, quae intolerabilis audacia foret, nominatim reprehendat aut insidiosa verborum circuitione ita notet designetque ut ab omnibus nosci facile possit" (l. c.). Again, keep from talking about delicate matters, in which a man's feelings are easily hurt, for instance, national faults, faults found only with certain classes and professions, fashions of dress followed by ladies. Be not too apodictic in your assertions, do not call certain actions mortal sins as long as there is room for an excuse. "Caveat concionator ne austera sui ipsius indole et rigidiorum scriptorum auctoritate motus tamquam lethalia peccata facile quaedam damnet quae piorum et gravissimorum antistitum et theologorum pudicio aut nulla reprehensione digna aut tantum venialia censentur. Unde mala maxima et plurima existunt. Licita enim aut minus prava per falsam ut vocant conscientiam crimina fiunt

gravissima quae in mortem animae cedunt." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 141.) In discoursing on dogmatic matters, avoid all subtle questions, do not touch upon difficulties and doubts which are out of the reach of your hearers, for this may be detrimental to faith, especially with young people. Lay a particular stress upon divine authority, and do not minimize the Christian dogma in order to please nominal Catholics, who wish to serve both God and the world. "Non suum non verbum hominis sed sicut est vere verbum Dei annuntiare debet concionator. Idecirco non dubia neque incerta, non sua placita auditoribus proponat, sed certa et vera quae ex sacris libris eorumque fidissimis interpretibus Conciliis nempe Patribus ac Pontificibus depromuntur. Quum de fide catholica agit depositum custodiat devitetque profanas vocum novitates quibus res ipsae paullatim corrumpuntur. Ut vetus auctor monet nove dicat non tamen nova" (l. c.). Do not desecrate the House of God by meddling with politics in your sermons. "Multo minus se civilibus aut politicis rebus immisceat; aut de magistratibus vel rempublicam moderantibus ea quae aequae an inique sentiat in medium proferat. Quod quidem sine maxima bonorum offensione et sacri muneris dedecore fieri nunquam potest."\* (Conc. Baltim., n. 142.) Even so-called patriotic harangues should not find their way into the pulpit. They belong to the lecture room and to the public hall. Patriotism is hardly lost sight of by any people in our days. It rather needs a check lest it turn into a false pride and race hatred, than a stir. Great care, finally, must be exercised in speaking on money matters. In this country, where the Church has to depend entirely on the charity and good will of her members, a pastor may be compelled occasion-

\* However, if perchance a political question should at the same time involve religious interests, such as the erection of parochial schools, freedom of worship in public institutions, the pastor is obliged to instruct the people on the religious aspect of such question.

ally to remind the people of their duty to contribute their share towards the support of ecclesiastical institutions and ecclesiastical persons. Whenever you deem it necessary to give an admonition of this kind, do it from a broad standpoint of faith and morals, not by scolding, but by instructing the people. Show them how and why they should have a generous heart, a special blessing being attached to such generosity. Encourage them to give cheerfully and to be led by a truly religious and supernatural motive. Sermons of this kind will not fail to produce fruit, provided they do not occur too often. Particular statements or remarks of a strictly financial character should not be interwoven with a sermon; they come under the rubric of announcements. These latter have to precede the sermon, or, what is still better, follow after Mass. Even in the announcements never attempt to become personal or show a spirit of avarice and greediness for money, especially as regards your own income.

238. A good sermon needs preparation. The priest who ascends the pulpit without first having carefully thought on what he shall preach and without having arranged at least the substance of his points, commits a great wrong. He tempts God and dishonors his ministry. The manner of preparing may differ according to circumstances. The advice, however, which we feel impelled to give our young ecclesiastics is to write their sermons in full for the first five years after their ordination and to learn them by heart. Tiresome as this work is, it will accustom you to a habit of study; it will help you to have a certain order in your sermons, and it will prevent you from common-place talking. Indeed, the poor people who have been toiling along the whole week with a mind absorbed in worldly matters, when they come to church on Sunday, have a right to hear something good, apt to refresh their souls. Do not feed them, therefore, with a speech hastily patched up at random. Cardinal Gibbons rightfully observes: "Imagine a clergyman strutting into



the pulpit and in the sacred precincts of the temple before a hushed congregation, delivering himself in a tiresome and perfunctory manner of some common-place remarks, which the people have heard over and over again; or becoming a Jupiter tonans, making up for lack of ideas by a thundering and aggressive voice, or talking throughout of dollars and cents, without any allusion to the Gospel; or indulging in general vituperation; or venting his anger on a particular parishioner under a thin disguise of language which many of his hearers, as well as the object of his assault, can easily penetrate. I can hardly conceive a spectacle more cowardly and contemptible than that of an anointed minister taking unwarrantable advantage of the immunity which his sacred office bestows on him, protected by the armor of his priestly robes, sheltering himself behind the breastworks of the pulpit, and pouring forth volleys of offensive language, that he would not dare to utter to a gentleman on the streets. Such license must arouse in every honest breast sentiments of righteous indignation. The people came for bread, and they received a stone. They came for peace and consolation, and their hearts were filled with sadness and irritation." (Ambassador of Christ, p. 273.)

#### ARTICLE IV.

##### MANNER OF PREACHING.

239. The first requisite of a good sermon is simplicity. The minister of God must speak in a language which the whole audience is able to understand. "*Meminerit verbi divini minister se omnibus tam insipientibus quam sapientibus esse debitorem. Non igitur in sublimitate sermonis neque in persuasibilibus humanæ sapientiæ verbis sed in ostensione spiritus et virtutis munere suo fungatur. Non fucato sermone inanique verborum pompa non ambitiosæ facundiæ lenocinio auribus illecebram*

paret sed panem vite salutarem esurientibus frangat ac porrigat, ut decet Dei ministrum et fidelem mysteriorum Ejus dispensatorem." (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 138.) But too many sermons fail to produce the desired effect for want of plainness. Lofty thoughts and ingenious reflections may be good enough for a lecture held in presence of a learned assembly or before professional men. A sermon, however, is intended for all. The wise and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the old and the young, men and women, should derive benefit from it. "Except," says St. Paul, "you utter by the tongue plain speech, how shall it be known what is said?—For you shall be speaking into the air." (I. Cor. xiv., 9.) High-sounding words, embellished phrases, flowery language, long and rounded periods are unintelligible to persons of ordinary capacity, of which the bulk of the audiences in our churches is made up. Even the few learned stragglers who may be able to comprehend their meaning, will, it is to be feared, rather feel delighted by the style and the oratorical display than be moved by the truths expressed. St. Francis of Sales, in a letter addressed to an ecclesiastic, justly says: "Lengthened periods, polished language, studied gesture and the like are the bane of preaching. The texture of the discourse should be natural, without vain ornament, without affected expression. I know that many say the preacher should delight; but, as for me, I distinguish and say, that there is a pleasure consequent on the doctrine which is preached and the impression made upon the hearers; for what soul is so insensible as not to feel extreme pleasure in learning the way to heaven: how to gain paradise; in comprehending the love which God bears us? And in order to impart this pleasure all diligence should be used to instruct and to move. But there is another sort of pleasure which oftentimes is an obstacle to instruction and to persuasion—a tickling of the ear by profane elegance of language and a certain balancing of words which is altogether artificial. And as to this I say,

without hesitation, that a preacher should not make use of it because it belongs to profane orators, and whosoever preaches in this manner preaches not Christ crucified, but himself. St. Paul detests preachers who are 'prurientes auribus,' and, consequently, such as are solicitous to please their hearers."

240. However, there is another fault to be avoided. Some priests, especially in rural districts, seem to believe that popular preaching consists in using the vulgar expressions of the street, in telling witty stories or ridiculous anecdotes. "*Curet concionator ne unum vitium effugiendo in alterum incurrat et sermo ejus ex facili in humilem rudem et incompositum delabatur. Neque ut plebecula libentius atque attentius audiat, vocibus e platea et trivio haustis utatur aut jocis et facetiis indulgeat. Cui enim ne domi quidem et inter suos scurram aut minum agere liceat, id enim in templo ipsam prope aram et sacro munere fungentem facere maximae impietatis est.*" (Conc. Baltim. II., n. 138.) "A facetious remark naturally suggested by the occasion may be, perhaps, allowed; but to reduce the exhortation to a comic scene—as some do by introducing ridiculous trifles or curious stories with attitudes and gestures designed to make the audience laugh—I do not know how they can reconcile such an exhibition with the respect due to the temple of God and to the pulpit from which is announced the word of God and in which the preacher fulfills the office of Ambassador of Jesus Christ. The auditors, indeed, will laugh and be merry, but afterwards they will be distracted and indevout, and instead of attending to the moral instruction will continue to reflect upon the witticism or ridiculous story they have heard." (St. Alphonsus, Letter to a Religious.)

241. A good sermon ought to be not only plain, but also logical. The arguments must be advanced so as to make an impression. Proofs based upon the authority of the Scriptures should be first adduced, next those relying upon the Fathers, finally those which are drawn from

reason; all to be followed by examples and illustrations. Accurately recite the texts of Holy Writ and in a manner that is emphatic and impressive. The transition from one point to another must be made naturally so that the last part has some connection with the following one. A sermon should have three great or main divisions: (*a*), the exordium, or introduction; (*b*), the body of the discourse; (*c*), the peroration, or conclusion. In the exordium you first prepare your hearers as to the subject you wish to speak upon; in the body of the oration you largely dwell upon the subject chosen; in the peroration, besides recapitulating briefly what you have said before, you add a moral exhortation and an appeal to the passions. In an ordinary Sunday sermon it will be best to observe the catechetical form in the way of questions and answers. In a class of catechism the answers are given by the scholars; in a sermon the preacher will, after he has put the question, add the answer himself. This mode of preaching undoubtedly is the most instructive and the most productive of fruit.

242. To give effect to your speech you require action. The tone of your voice, the gesticulation of your hands, the motion of your body, must be in proportion to what your lips utter. Our space does not allow us to enter into detail. We must refer our readers to books of rhetoric. It may suffice to quote the words of St. Alphonsus: "As far as regards the voice, the preacher should avoid speaking in an inflated tone or in a monotonous and invariably loud tone of voice. What moves and engages the attention of the hearers is, to speak one time in a strong, at another time in a middle voice, and at another in a low voice, according as it suits the sentiment that is expressed, but without any sudden or violent fall or elevation; now to exclaim, now to pause; and now to resume with a sigh. This variety of tone and manner keeps the audience always attentive. The preacher should avoid gestures that are affected or oftentimes repeated in the same form, or too vehement with much agitation of the body. The arms

should be moved with moderation; the hands should not be raised above the head, nor too much extended sideways, nor held too confined. In delivering the exordium the preacher should remain stationary; in delivering the first sentence he should not use gesture; in the second he should only commence to use the right hand, keeping the left resting on the pulpit or on the breast. Let him take care not to keep the arms attached too close to the sides or to raise them both at the same time in form of a cross, or throw them behind the shoulders. He must rarely strike them against each other or against the pulpit; to stamp the feet is very unbecoming. It is a fault to twist the head, or move it too often or too violently, or to hold it always raised or always inclined upon the breast. The eyes ought to accompany the motion of the head; whence it is a fault to keep them always closed or cast downwards, or fixed immovably in one direction. The preacher should never run from one side of the pulpit to the other. He should, for the most part, speak from a middle position, so as to be seen equally from either side, but it is useful to incline occasionally to the right or left without, however, turning the back to the opposite direction." (St. Alph. Instruction to Preacher, 243.) As to the length of sermons, we wish to state this much: No sermon should exceed a whole hour, because this is very fatiguing for the hearers, filling them with disgust and thus destroying the good fruit. For an ordinary Sunday sermon half an hour is fully enough. During the hot season, or when it is extremely cold in winter, you may be satisfied with a discourse lasting about fifteen minutes, and for an early Low Mass five minutes are sufficient. "*Tertio brevis sit oratio evangelica. Non opus est longa concione inter missarum sollemnias. Neque verendum est ne cuiquam minus placeat brevitatis, quam rerum dicendarum gravitas et grata quaedam orationis varietas comitetur.*" Con. Baltim. III., n. 216.)

## PART II.

## CATECHETICS.

## ARTICLE I.

## IMPORTANCE OF CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

244. The ministry of teaching divine truth is not confined to preaching. Sermons are given principally for the benefit of grown people, for adults whose mental capacity and religious training is sufficiently advanced to enable them to listen with success to a public discourse. But what about youth, about children? Shall they be allowed to grow up without any religious instruction, or may a pastor safely leave their whole religious training in the hands of the parents? Certainly not. "Sinite parvulos ad me venire et ne prohibueritis eos," Christ said, thus insinuating that it is a duty incumbent on all pastors of souls not to neglect imparting divine truth to the little ones. The religious training of youth is called catechizing (from the Greek word *κατηχίζειν*, which means to sound or sound into one's ears). This work is performed both in church and in school. It differs greatly from preaching, as children cannot be made to learn Christian doctrine except by a slow process, by gradual development. Besides, it is not enough to explain things to these young folks; it is also necessary to question them, that you may see whether their mind has conceived the right ideas and whether they retain things in their memory. Finally,



the Divine word must be expounded to children in a language familiar to their ears. Terms and sentences must, as much as possible, be chosen after the manner of children. Not solid food yet, but milk, in a spiritual sense, ought to be offered to them, in a similar way as we see it done in the physical and natural order, where mothers also give their babes and sucklings first the milk taken from their own breasts. St. Augustine calls these catechumens: "germen pium, examen novellum, flos nostri honoris et fructus laboris, gaudium et corona mea." Indeed, a priest should always look upon the little ones of his congregation as the most precious portion of his flock, as tender plants of which he is the gardener, the keeper. The teaching of catechism is more important than preaching, but, at the same time, also more difficult. It is an humble work which leaves little room for honor and ambition, but which just for that reason may be more meritorious. "The instruction of children becomes a grateful task to the pastor, when he reflects that he is casting the seed of faith in virgin and fruitful soil, where there are no briars or weeds of doubt to choke it. The child is naturally innocent and artless, open and ingenuous, affectionate and confiding. He accepts without misgiving the truths that are taught him. The pastor has, therefore, an open and solid foundation on which to rear the edifice of faith and piety. He has no rubbish of false doctrines to clear away before he begins to erect the building. He has no obstacles to remove, no sophistries to encounter, no prejudice to overcome. In the words of St. Peter, his pupils, "as new-born babes, receive the rational milk without guile that thereby they may grow unto salvation." They have no more suspicion of any poison or error in the food of knowledge given them than the infant that is nourished at the breast of its mother." (Cardinal Gibbons, Ambassador of Christ.)

245. From early times the Church has carefully insisted on the education of youth, because if the rising

*Fathers. The great Catechism. Cynellus. Eugene. The. (Hunt's 48-50-52) Eugene. The.*

generation be left in ignorance about what concerns our eternal salvation the future of the Church itself would be thereby jeopardized. Saintly and learned men in all ages, men who have been regular pillars of theological science, have not considered it unworthy of their position to teach the little ones. St. Augustine did not only himself instruct catechumens, but took pains to publish a special book for the use of catechists. This little volume (*de catechizandis rudibus*) is still of great value and deserves no less admiration than the large theological works left by the same author. Gerson, the illustrious chancellor of the University of Paris, felt proud in teaching children the rudiments of faith. When some people hinted to him that this humble work might be derogatory to his rank and position, he vindicated himself by his beautiful little treatise, "*de parvulis trahendis ad Christum*." St. Charles Borromeo could find no better means to bring about a reform in his diocese than the establishing of a large number of schools in which Christian doctrine might be imparted to youth. St. Francis de Sales acted on the same principle, and by his own example tried to foster among his clergy a zeal for the religious instruction of children. Of this Saint, so much beloved and admired for his tenderness and meekness, a contemporary remarks: "I had the happiness of assisting at these blessed instructions and never before did I witness such a sight. The good and gentle Father was seated on a raised chair, his little army around him. It was charming to hear how familiarly he explained the rudiments of faith. At each step numerous comparisons fell from his lips. He looked at his little crowd and his little crowd looked at him. He became a child with them in order to form in them the perfect man according to Jesus Christ." In our own age who has not heard of the successful catechists, Dupanloup, Sailer, Wittmann, Gruber. Dupanloup, who, when stationed at the Church of St. Madeleine in Paris, by his wonderful manner of catechizing, attracted

*Teacher of the little ones for the Superior of the 16th Century*  
*First Catechists of the 16th Century*

crowds, not only of young folks, but also of grown people, speaks from experience when he says: "I owe everything to the catechisms; everything for my soul, everything for my ministry, everything for my heart. I would even say everything for my career." We could, indeed, mention many other names, but these will suffice, we are confident, to stimulate in our young ecclesiastics a holy ardor for the so important function entrusted to the priesthood, namely, that of catechizing the juvenile portion of the fold of Christ.

246. It is not left optional to pastors of souls as to how often they shall teach catechism. The Council of Trent says: "*Episcopi etiam saltem dominicis et aliis festivis diebus pueros in singulos parochiis fidei rudimenta diligenter ab iis ad quos spectabit, doceri curabunt et si opus sit etiam per censuras ecclesiasticas compellent non obstantibus privilegiis et consuetudinibus.*" (Sess. XIV., c. IV.) The Fathers of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore are very emphatic in urging all priests who have care of souls to comply well with their duty of catechizing, which, they say, can never be dispensed with. "*Ad rectores animarum spectat per se ipsos pascere gregis sui agnos. Patris nomine prorsus indignus foret ille qui filio fame pereunti panem frangere inique recusaret. Volumus ergo ut rectores ecclesiarum vel eorum vicarii saepius adeant dominicis diebus scholas catechismi, ferialibus autem parochiales ac etiam collegia seu gymnasia et academias puerorum et puellarum quae a sacerdotibus non reguntur. Praeceptores sacerdotali charactere non insigniti, sive religiosi sive laici, magno equidem sunt adjumento in juvenum institutione, at munus verbi Dei docendi sibi proprium non habent. Labia enim sacerdotis custodient scientiam et legem requirent ex ore ejus.*" (Conc. Baltim. III., tit. VII., c. II., n. 217.)

## ARTICLE II.

## PERSONAL ENDOWMENTS OF THE CATECHIST.

247. The catechist, as a matter of course, must be pious, zealous and devoted to his work. It is self-evident, too, that he must have a thorough knowledge of what he intends to teach. Also here applies what we have said in a foregone article concerning the requisites of a good preacher. Apart, however, from piety and knowledge, a catechist must be eminently endowed with three virtues, namely: love, patience, and gentleness. His love must be that supernatural love which makes him consider each pupil an innocent and immortal soul destined for heaven and to be led thither through his guidance. Our divine Saviour furnishes us the best pattern of this love. It was His joy to gather the little ones around His sacred person, to speak to them as a father speaks to his own child, that he might gain their confidence and be able to instill into the young minds ideas of eternal truth and to implant in their hearts habits of virtue. The disciples, feeling indignant at what they deemed undue molestation, tried to keep away the youths and their mothers, but the divine Master kindly reproved them, saying: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." "Amen, I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it; and, embracing them and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them."

248. If a catechist be gifted with love, he will not be wanting in patience. Not all children are bright, attractive, well-bred, but you find among them many who are dull, hard to grasp at anything, ill-bred, talkative, subject to evil habits, obstinate, disobedient, lazy. Add to this the fact that children often receive little or no education at home, that they are surrounded by vicious examples, their father, perhaps, being a drunkard, their

mother a non-Catholic, or, if she be a Catholic, careless about her religious duties; that their attendance is very irregular on account of long distance from the church, for want of clothing, etc. It sometimes takes a truly heroic courage not to become utterly disgusted with certain youngsters. Again, it is not an easy matter to accommodate yourself to the capacity of the juvenile mind, to step down from the high platform of your own education to the level ground on which children move. You may have to repeat again and again, ask one and the same question ten times over, ask it in different ways and forms that all may understand it, not only the intelligent scholars, but also those who are less talented.

249. Gentleness is a third requisite for a good catechist. He always ought to put on a friendly mien, always show a bright countenance. Your soul may be ever so much troubled, your mind feel ever so much pained, do not let out your bad humor before the children. Keep your temper and conceal your inward sentiments, as a mother is wont to hide the anxieties of her heart before her little ones. Ungentle manners will be at once noticed by the pupils, they will lose confidence in their teacher and hate to attend his instructions. An amiable way of action, on the contrary, will attract the youthful hearts and make them attend with pleasure. "*Ex ipsa tristitia sermo procedens minus gratus est, quia de ariditate moestitiae minus exuberat. Multo gratius audimur quum et nos eodem opere delectamur. Jam vero si usitata et parvulis congruentia repetere fastidimus, congruamus eis per fraternum, paternum maternumque amorem et copulatis cordi eorum etiam nobis nova videbuntur. Tantum enim valet compatiens affectus ut quum illi afficiuntur nobis loquentibus et nos illis discentibus habitemus in invicem; atque ita et illi quae audiunt quasi loquuntur in nobis et nos in illis discamus quodammodo, quae docemus.*" (S. August. de catech. rud., c. 10-15.)

## ARTICLE III.

## MODE OF CATECHIZING.

## A—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

250. Always see to it that the pupils of the catechism class pay close attention, and, therefore, insist upon the strictest silence. It will help much to the purpose to have a certain order and fixed arrangement as to the places assigned to each scholar. The smaller and younger children should sit next to the catechist, the older ones further back, but each one must have his special place marked out for him. When you are speaking let your eyes wander over the whole class, for this is the best means to keep them attentive. Those who are unruly must be called to order, but quietly. Never use any corporal punishment; never strike or slap on the face; girls you should not even dare to touch. Do not give the children opprobrious or vulgar names, rather praise and encourage them. Little presents in the shape of books, pictures, medals, etc., will help to foster diligence, provided they be given rarely and only to those who really deserve them.

251. Let your voice be moderate. Do not speak too loud, or in a shrill tone, or too quick. Modulate your voice according to the nature of the subject which you discourse on. When you notice that the children get restless, that they begin to move and to talk, try to find out what is the cause of it; perhaps you must blame yourself for it. Do not simply preach to your class by doing all the speaking yourself; give the children a chance to speak by interposing questions ever and anon, especially asking those who seem to pay no attention. Occasionally you may tell a little story to get them interested and to fix their minds on the matter.



252. The instruction must be adapted to the age and condition of the audience. It must be given in a manner that all fully understand. The catechism or book which is in the hands of the children shows you the way to be followed; but you must not be satisfied with simply imparting into the minds of the scholars the words of the text; you ought to add to it the necessary explanation. "In catechizandis rudibus," says St. Augustine, "*via tritissima tenenda est. Quid vero hoc sibi vult? Nihil aliud nisi per analogiam singula in libro tantummodo brevissime notata explicare et quasi illustrare.*" A mere recitation of what the catechism contains is not sufficient; the matter must, as it were, be digested. However, in your language, in your words and sentences, accommodate yourself to the mode in which children think and speak. Do not bring forward too many abstract terms, but prefer concrete expressions; foreign terms should not be made use of at all, or be first well interpreted. Here we have some trouble with our English language; but too many words which originally are derived from the Latin and French are unintelligible to children. Hard as it may sometimes seem to find the right expression, still a little experience will remove the difficulty. Among children a teacher must think and talk like a child—in short sentences and in a conversational tone. St. Augustine again gives us a beautiful description of it: "*Suavius est matri minuta mansa inaspere parvulo filio quam ipsam mandere ac devorare grandiora. Non ergo recedat de pectore etiam cogitatio gallinae illius quae languidulis plumis teneros foetus operit et susurrantes pullos confracta voce advocat cujus blandas alas refugientes superbi praeda fiunt alitibus.*"

253. The dogmas of faith must be taught wholly and completely as something which we have to believe, because God the eternal Truth has told us so. Show the beauty and great advantages of these dogmas by applying them to practical life. Especially when the principal feasts of

the ecclesiastical year, such as Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, come around, it is proper to insert a little instruction on the very dogma which the feast suggests. Thus you lead these little lambs of the fold of Christ right to the fountain of life and suckle them, as it were, at the breast of their mother, *i. e.*, the Church.

#### B—SPECIAL RULES.

254. Questioning is an indispensable feature of catechetical instruction. It constitutes, if we may say so, the very soul of it. This questioning, however, must not be done at random, but in a proper form and according to fixed principles. Just follow the order of the catechism and insist upon it that the young scholars learn their lessons exactly as they are in the book or "*verboten*us." Be not satisfied with incomplete or mutilated answers, or which are only according to the sense. To facilitate the whole affair we advise you to observe the following rules:

(a) Let the pupils, either singly or in chorus, read that part which they shall have to study for the next class.

(b) This being done, immediately add what is called verbal explanation, namely, an interpretation of the words and sentences only.

(c) In the next class have them recite their lesson and examine them as to the meaning of the different terms and expressions in the way as they had been interpreted before. Do not ask only the bright and talented scholars, but also those who are slow and hard to be taught. If they give a good answer, praise them; if not, help them a little; if they are really lazy, punish them, but not too severely, lest they become utterly disgusted with religion.

(d) After the recitation is over, give an explanation of the matter itself. Analyze the various points, render them clearer by comparisons or analogies. Demonstrate the excellence and practical worth of the dogma or precept.

Try to make an impression upon the hearts to win the affections and to arouse the will of your juvenile hearers. Bring forward examples to illustrate the matter, especially such as are found in Bible history or in the lives of the Saints. However, let not your discourse become too long, interpose questions again right in the midst of it, lest the children get distracted. At the next hour you will examine them on the matter thus explained.

255. There are two methods of teaching: the synthetic and the Socratic method. The first one means to teach so that the pupil simply listens and patiently receives the ideas conveyed to his mind. Naturally, in this case, the teacher is supposed to be invested with a sort of authority or at least of intellectual superiority. The Socratic method signifies that mode of teaching by which the pupil himself has to discover what he is looking for, ascending step by step until he reaches the final point. The teacher, in this case, only guides by suggestion or by answering questions put to him. The method to be followed in catechetical instructions ought to be the synthetic method. Christian doctrine is based upon divine authority; the priest is invested with power to teach; the children respect and honor him. They do not desire to hunt after truth; they expect the priest to tell them what they have to believe and to do. The Socratic method may be followed but seldom and with advanced scholars.

256. Distinction has to be made between the catechetical instruction given in school and the one which takes place in church. At the first one only the children are present, and but one particular class or department; in the second one also those participate who do not attend school any longer, say, youths up to the age of fifteen or sixteen, and even grown people, especially the parents of the children, may come to listen. At this latter one the priest may discourse a little more and insert such points which are instructive for all, but the instruction as such must be given to the children, though on a broader

scale than in school. It is an error to believe that the instruction in Christian doctrine may be left to school teachers, lay or religious. They have no "missio canonica." Besides, they lack the necessary knowledge; they have not made any theological studies, excellent though they may be in other branches. Christian doctrine must not be placed on the same level with secular science. The teaching of it, first and last, belongs to the priest. He should consider this as one of his primary duties and visit the parochial school which is under his care regularly at stated hours and on fixed days. He must make an agreement on this point with the teachers, so that they, as well as the children, are ready when he comes. It depends upon the number of pupils and the degree of advancement they have made how often the religious instruction given by the priest should take place. When the classes are large the pastor should attend to it every day, or else every other day, or at least twice a week. The school teachers may be engaged in what we call the technical part of religious instruction, namely, the recitation and the verbal explanation, and to this they should attend every day, say, for half an hour in the morning after school has opened. Whenever the classes or grades of the school are not very large it may be advisable to combine two of them for catechetical instruction. Things must be arranged so that children, during the age they go to school, learn the whole catechism and Bible history at least twice before they make their first Communion. Have a list of each department and do not allow any to absent themselves. The school teachers may be consulted by the priest as to what department the individual scholars should be assigned, but after they have been placed the teachers ought not make a change on their own accord, they should first see the pastor about it.

257. One remark we desire to add concerning those congregations or missions which have no parochial school. Their number, also, is still very great.

The principal thing is to see that the children of such districts get a thorough religious instruction at their first Communion. Still, it would be exceedingly wrong to let them grow up without any religious training until they reached the age of about twelve years, or to leave the whole matter in the hands of the parents at home. Do the best you can under the circumstances. Gather the children in church every Sunday and at an hour that suits. Divide them into classes or grades, at least have two departments, a senior and a junior department, and teach them yourself. In missions that have no regular Sunday service you must employ some lay person, male or female, for the purpose of teaching the children of the congregation the catechism on Sundays when there is no Mass. Inform the teachers well as to what they are to do, and supply them with books that may be a help to them. Parties willing to assume this office and task of charity can be found in almost any place; but it is wrong to leave the whole work in their hands and to have nothing in the line of religious instruction of youth except a Sunday school carried on by a lay teacher all the year round. A priest neglecting his duty to this extent is unworthy of the name of pastor, and he will have to answer for many a soul lost through his fault. "Neglect of a child is far more pernicious than the neglect of an adult member. It will be impossible for the child to practice religion if he has not received a sound religious instruction, and to refuse or neglect to give him that instruction is almost identical with casting him away from the Church, keeping him from God and Christ, and dooming him to eternal perdition." (Luebbemann, Priest in the Pulpit.) A Sunday school is but a poor and scanty supplement of that religious education which a child receives by attending a parochial school. Therefore, if possible at missions where no parochial school exists, the pastor should appoint days

beside Sunday for catechetical instruction; thus only he may hope to meet with a somewhat satisfactory result in the end.

#### ARTICLE IV.

##### CATECHETICAL BOOKS.

258. Although the catechist by his living word contributes a great deal towards the religious instruction of children, yet these must have a book which, in a short and concise way, contains the principal points of Christian doctrine, and which, therefore, may serve as a guide. The two requisites demanded for a good catechism are: truth, and a plain language which children can easily understand. Many catechisms fail as to this second requisite, the language not being suited to the youthful mind. The Fathers of the Third Council of Baltimore have tried to create uniformity in regard to catechisms used throughout this country by issuing the following decree: "Statuimus ut instituatur comitatus Rmorum Episcoporum quorum erit: 1, Cathechismum seligere, prout magis necessarium et opportunum aestimaverint. 2, Opus suum ita perfectum ad coetum Rmorum Archiepiscoporum remittere qui denuo catechismum recognoscent et typis accurate mandari curabunt. Hoc catechismo in lucem edito, quamprimum uti teneantur omnes animarum curam habentes et praeceptores tam religiosi quam laici" (n. 219). The catechism thus ordered was published soon after. Still, it did not meet with the desired result. The book was found faulty and many bishops have hesitated to adopt it or prescribe it for their dioceses. Thus the question as regards a uniform catechism for the whole United States is yet in *statu quo*. Wherever the Baltimore Catechism, or any other, has been prescribed by the Ordinary, a pastor cannot dispense with it, because the Ordinary's authority on this head is unquestionable. The Baltimore Catechism has been intended as



obligatory only for English schools and congregations, though it was the wish of the prelates that it be translated into other languages and be taught in them as well. The Council also recommends that religious instruction be given children of foreign tongue, both in English and in their mother tongue. "Wherever this is not carried out or may not be practicable, the catechist may find frequent occasion to use both languages in particular instances in the course of his instruction. He may illustrate the term in one language by the corresponding term in the other language and thus turn the disadvantage into a decided advantage. It will, beyond dispute, always be advisable to mention the English term along with the other, at least in the more important and fundamental doctrines, since these children may, as the Council observes, at a future time, be placed in circumstances where entire nescience of English religious terms would entail serious disadvantage." (Luebbermann, l. c.)

259. Along with catechism, Bible history must be taught. Bible history is to catechism what the book of exercises is in relation to grammar. Both are necessary to acquire a thorough knowledge of the matter of instruction. In primary schools Bible history should furnish the main subject of religious teaching, because historical facts are concrete things and hence more easily grasped at by beginners than abstract doctrines. It will be necessary, though, to have a short abstract of biblical stories for primers or else to select but certain easy and interesting chapters, and to reserve the rest for advanced classes. We may be permitted to append a few sentences from the preface of the English translation of Knecht's Commentary on Holy Scripture: "Bible history, to claim a place in religious instruction, must do so only inasmuch as it bears on the doctrines of faith. Thus Bible history becomes an object lesson in faith, a veritable pictorial catechism. How powerfully, for instance, is the truth of an all-ruling Providence illustrated by the histories of Joseph

and Abraham. Bible history develops and expands truth. The texts of Scripture that in the catechism stand isolated and shorn of their contexts are now seen in the light of their surroundings and speak to us with a new force and meaning. It is clear that Bible history is not to be read merely as a story book, that it is to be studied not on its own account, but because it imparts life and vigor to religious instruction. The first stage in teaching Bible history is the narrative. The teacher tells the story briefly so as to enable the children to see with their eyes and hear with their ears what is to be said and done. A story well told is half explained. After the story has been told, the children open their books and one or more read it aloud, the teacher adding any further explanation that may be necessary. But the impression will quickly disappear unless measures be taken to fix it in the memory. This is the next process. The repetition in class consists in the children telling the story independently and in a connected way. But the deeper meaning of the story is still hidden from them. The commentary is the key that opens the gate of this wider knowledge. Every Bible story contains dogmatic and moral truths. To draw out these truths and to bring them vividly before the children is the most important part of instruction in Bible history. And this is the function of the commentary. In the application the truths elicited are brought home to the individual child and are held up to him as a rule of life and conduct."

260. Catechetical literature—

Thein, *The Catechism of Rodez* (Herder, St. Louis).

Dupanloup, *Ministry of Catechizing* (Benziger Bros., New York).

Luebberrmann, *Priest in the Pulpit* (Benziger Bros., New York).

Hay, *Sincere Christian*.

Keenan, *Catechism of the Christian Religion*.

Mrs. Sadlier, *Catholic Anecdotes*.

Knecht, *Commentary on Holy Scripture*.

Knecht, Praktischer Kommentar zur Biblischen Geschichte.

Lambing, The Sunday School Teacher's Manual.

Power, The General Catechism Familiarly Explained.

Noser, Katechetik.

Gruber, Katechetisches Handbuch.

Mey, Vollständige Katechesen.

Deharbe, Erklärung des Katholischen Katechismus.

Schmitt, Erklärung des Mittleren Deharbe'schen Katechismus.

Faerber, Commentar zum Katechismus fuer Pfarrschulen.

Jungmann, Theorie der Geistlichen Beredsamkeit.

S. Augustinus, Liber de Catechizandis Rudibus.

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## SECTION III.

## PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION.

## PART I.

## TEMPORAL MATTERS.

## CHAPTER I.

## ORGANIZATION OF PARISHES.

261. This country, the United States, is called a mission country, because with us ecclesiastical affairs have not yet obtained that stability and perfect order which is found in countries where the Church has existed for centuries, and where custom or law has determined in full detail all which comes under the head of Church government. Plenary and provincial councils, in connection with the instructions sent out by the Propaganda, or issued by bishops, have endeavored to remove much of the old uncertainty, that in consideration of the new and particular circumstances under which this country has grown up, could not be avoided. Yet, withal, there is room for improvement, and bishops and priests in the United States are still true missionaries, whose duty it is to organize and build for the future, and not only to preserve what has been handed down from the past. By the oath of fidelity, which everyone who is ordained "titulo missionis" must take, a

*Do not be too  
hasty in making  
reforms, especially in  
ecclesiastical  
order as population  
can make no  
changes*

priest is bound to go whithersoever his bishop or ordinary will send him. Following the maxim of the Apostle, "omnibus omnia factus sum," he must be ready to sacrifice his fortune, his health, his person. He must divest himself of any predilection for a certain place, of national feelings, especially in mixed congregations, of love of comfort and luxury. If the place is new, he ought to build it up; if it has been neglected, he ought to reform it; if debts have been contracted, he ought to see that they are paid, no matter whether he derive any personal advantage from his action or not. Success may come later on, although the one that has done the labor may not share in it or have any personal or earthly benefit from his work. The heavenly recompense promised by our Lord to His faithful servants shall never fail him.

262. Not seldom a priest will be forced to commence altogether from the bottom by starting a new congregation. What, therefore, we may ask, shall be the procedure?

First of all it is necessary to have the bishop's consent to that effect, which consent, as a rule, should be given in writing. Next to this the needs and ability of the people must be examined. This may be done by a visit to the various houses and to each family, or by a public meeting called in a fitting place. If the majority, at least the most influential parties, are against the erection of a new parish, or a division of the old one, it may be better either to drop or postpone the matter. When there is a real necessity, the people otherwise suffering intense spiritual want, it will not be difficult to get the support of all good parties; a few dissenters should not be minded.

263. Suppose, now, that the question of building has been settled, then the next thing is a suitable place. As far as possible the church should be in the center of the congregation. In cities, do not build in the business part, nor too far off in the outskirts, nor near a railroad, nor close by a Protestant church, a public school, a jail, or a saloon. Choose a corner lot with sufficient ground for all

buildings, a whole block if you can; the ground must not be too low, too sandy, or too marshy. If the property has to be bought, it would not be wise to let a mortgage remain on it, but pay for it in cash. Besides, care must be taken that the soil be free from all incumbrance. To make sure of this, an abstract of title should be procured. The deed by which the property is transferred ought to be examined well. It should be a deed in fee simple. When the congregation has been incorporated, it must be in the legal title of such corporation, otherwise in the name of the bishop, but never in the name of the priest, unless he has paid for the property with his own money. The deed, after it has been drawn up in a regular form, must be recorded in the court house of the county within which the real estate is situated, otherwise the transfer will not be legal. A copy of the deed should be kept in the archives of the congregation; the original be sent to the bishop or his chancellor.

264. When the site has been selected and procured, the next thing will be to get the funds for erecting a church. It would be imprudent to contract a big amount of debt right from the beginning. Hence, never commence before you have at least one-half or two-thirds of the money likely to be spent, on hand, or sufficiently secured so as to get it whenever needed. Besides, never go beyond the present wants and means of the congregation, but build so that the church, school house, or whatever it is, can be easily enlarged. In cities it is best to begin by building a church and school combined.

The most common mode of getting money is to collect. It requires sacrifice on the part of the priest, but there is no way to avoid it. A collection tour of this kind may help the priest to become better acquainted with the members of his parish. Let him take up a census at the same time, and try to get an insight into the spiritual condition of his flock.

It may be a good thing to collect first from those who

*Michael of Little*



are poor or not well off, afterwards from the more wealthy parties, thus to arouse the ambition and zeal of the latter class. When the sums of money promised are comparatively large, prudence and economy demand that the paying terms be divided (six months, one year, two or three years). You must also take into consideration that some parties might fail or be too slow in paying their subscriptions. This deficiency may have to be supplied by loans, therefore timely provision should be made for them. A wise maxim is, to collect as long as the building is in progress, because when it is finished the good will and zeal of the people may become less ardent.

265. For the building of a church, school house, parsonage, etc., or any considerable portion thereof (tower, sacristy, sanctuary), a plan with specifications ought to be drawn by a competent architect, and be sent to the bishop for approbation. The pastor should study the plan and specifications himself, and also have others, that are competent to judge, inspect them; a great deal of money and trouble might, perhaps, thus be saved. After all these preparatory steps have been taken, a notice ought to be inserted in the local papers, inviting contractors and mechanics to come and figure on the plan, for which figuring enough time (about one month) should be allotted to them. On an appointed day they will meet together, and the pastor, with the building committee, if there be such, or with the trustees of the congregation, in presence of the superintendent, will open the sealed bids of the contractors to see who is the lowest bidder, to whom the contract will then be given. There are, however, different ways in letting contracts:

1. You let a contract for the whole structure or concern to one party, engaging him to furnish all the material, which material, however, must be well specified. This is the ordinary mode.
2. You give special contracts for the special depart-

ments—masonry, carpenter work, painting, etc.—again so that each contractor shall furnish the material.

3. You give a contract for labor only, and furnish all the material yourself. This mode is the cheapest, provided, however, that you have experience in business and are familiar with the rules of trade.

4. You make no regular contract, but, furnishing all the material, you hire the workmen yourself and pay them by the day or week. This mode may be adopted for smaller work and such that is not of great importance.

A few practical rules are the following:

(a) Always make a contract in writing, if the thing is of a considerable amount, and have it signed in presence of two witnesses that are disinterested parties.

(b) Never omit to ask bonds of the contractor to double the amount the work will cost.

(c) Always hold to the contract; never change it; for extra work make an extra contract, otherwise the contractors are not bound to their agreement, and they cannot be sued in court.

(d) Have the payments fixed beforehand, and do not pay until the work has been examined by the superintendent and found satisfactory.

(e) Be careful that the workmen are paid by the contractor with your money, likewise such firms that furnish the material, otherwise they will take a lien on the building and you may be obliged to pay twice. *never of building will have to pay*

(f) Although you have a superintendent, watch your workmen closely, and have work not well done undone immediately. Do not mind complaints raised by incompetent persons of the congregation.

(g) The building committee or board of trustees should be heard and consulted, but the pastor should not allow them simply to overrule him.

(h) Have a clause inserted in the contract that no work should be done on Catholic holy days of obligation.

(i) Have the time appointed when the work must be

done, and so that if not done the contractor will lose a certain percentage.

(j) Never pay more than has been stipulated, even if the contractors, by unforeseen circumstances, should have made nothing or have erred in their figuring.

## CHAPTER II.

### MANAGEMENT OF TEMPORALITIES.

#### A—GATHERING OF FUNDS.

266. A pastor must bear in mind that, as “*custos ecclesiae*,” he is responsible not only for the souls entrusted to his care, but also for the temporal goods which belong to his parish, since they are means by which the principal end, the eternal salvation of men and their spiritual welfare, is effected. Money, or its equivalent, being necessary for divine worship, the Church has claimed the possession of property as a right inherent to herself, and independent of all civil laws or state grants. Temporal goods belonging to ecclesiastical bodies are *eo ipso* “*res sacrae*,” whether blessed or not, wherefore those who are entrusted with their keeping and management, priests or laymen, commit a sacrilege if, through their culpable carelessness or malice, these goods are lost or become deteriorated in value.

267. As a rule, all pecuniary means needed for the support of religion in this country are to come out of the pockets of the Catholic people, who, so far, have contributed liberally towards this holy end and thus furnish a bright hope for the future. Pastors have the duty prudently to foster this spirit of sacrifice, especially among the rising generation, lest they grow cold in faith and become indifferent to the Christian heritage of their forefathers. It is also incumbent on them to handle well, with

a certain business tact and practical wisdom, the temporalities of their congregation or mission.

268. It must be borne in mind that only those ways and means may be used in acquiring funds for the support of religion which are neither in themselves wrong, unjust, unfair, scandalous, nor forbidden by diocesan or provincial laws. (cf. Coun. Balt. III., tit. IX., c. V.) The principal sources of income for parishes and missions are pew-rent, collections, subscriptions, sale of cemetery lots, fairs, picnics, donations. Pew-rent means the annual amount of money paid by parties for the exclusive right of occupying a seat or pew in the church during divine service. Custom and contract will determine how far this right goes; in no case, however, will it be a right of ownership, but only of use. Each one who wishes to be an active member of a parish should hold a pew. Parties who refuse to do so, have, strictly speaking, no title or claim upon the priest's ministry, although charity ought to prompt a priest not to refuse such ministry altogether, since, perhaps, just at such occasions a lost sheep may be brought back to the fold. Provision must also be made for the poor who are unable to pay anything, and to whom a seat ought to be assigned gratis. The rate of pew-rent is to be fixed so that the annual amount covers the current expenses, for which no other funds exist. Such current expenses are the priest's salary, fees for organist and sexton, ordinary repairs, light, fuel, interest, and insurance. The rent may vary in price, according to the location of the seats, or it may be the same throughout. The terms of payment must be arranged well, possibly it should be in advance, and a written or printed receipt handed to each pew-holder. In order to keep up regularity in this matter, it is advisable for the pastor to announce the terms a few weeks ahead, and to send a private notice once or twice to those that are in arrears. If this should have no effect, the pew may be closed and rented to another party.

269. The second source of getting money for church

purposes are the collections, which take place during divine service. A priest performing a sacred function, and especially a priest saying Mass, is strictly forbidden to interrupt such, and go around collecting through the aisles. This affair should be left to trustworthy laymen. When a collection is taken up for a special end, with the hope of getting an extraordinary amount, the use of envelopes has become customary, and may be allowed, but not too often (once or twice a year).

270. Subscriptions come next in order. They are resorted to when new buildings are to be constructed, when extraordinary improvements are to be made, when debts are to be paid off, or any other, not current, expenses step in. It is proper to explain to the people what the subscription is for, and how much you expect to raise. A preliminary meeting of the leading men of the congregation should first be held, to see whether a subscription under the circumstances will be practicable. Generally the priest himself will have to go around, and only if the district be too large, lay collectors may be appointed.

Under the head of subscriptions also fall the moneys gathered by societies, whose main object is to help the church through its financial struggles. Societies of this kind are building associations and altar societies. Building associations may work well in large city parishes; not so well in country missions. Altar societies should be established in all congregations; care, however, must be taken in organizing them. The lady president and treasurer ought to be persons with business tact, pious, and such as have the confidence of the rest. The members of this society may also be engaged for sweeping the church, washing the altar linen, sewing and mending articles of the sanctuary.

271. Furthermore, the sale of cemetery lots may constitute a source of income for the church. No general rule can be given here, as all depends upon local circumstances. This, however, is certain, the deed granted must

not convey the right of ownership, but simply the right of use. The moneys thus received, the Council of Baltimore directs, must not be appropriated by the priest.

272. Fairs, picnics, and other festivals, are the next means to enlarge the pecuniary resources of the congregation. The Council of Baltimore does not forbid, but tolerates them under certain conditions; we are warned to be cautious in regard to them, as they are fraught with evil. This evil lies in the fact that thus the merit of the people is greatly diminished or lost altogether, it being not only a work of charity and religion, but also of personal gain; again, there is evil in the nightly gatherings of young folks, in dances, and the sale of intoxicating liquors. These two latter things are now strictly forbidden. Only when there is a real necessity a pastor may hold a fair or festival of any kind, and then under the condition that all precautions have been taken, to lessen the dangers as much as possible. Festivals, bazars, etc., if arranged for the benefit of a church, are simply a *malum minus*, to be tolerated, but not to be encouraged. Let every priest at such occasions watch lest doubtful characters intrude themselves. Have a public officer stationed there, forbid the sale of liquors, eliminate unjust or scandalous games, tricks, etc., and never arrange a fair or like amusements during Lent or Advent, neither on Sundays, holy days, fast days. Of course, after it has been decided to hold a festival, a priest owes it to the congregation to work for it and to make it a success. For this purpose it is necessary to have the least expense possible, and to appoint the right persons in the different departments, that a good net income may be obtained.

273. As a last monetary source, donations may be specified. Thus, individual persons, or societies as a body, may contribute towards the support of the church by making presents in the shape of altars, pulpits, chalices, windows, organs, bells, chandeliers, etc. With prudence and zeal a pastor ought to arouse a holy ambition or emulation



of this sort amongst his flock; also occasionally remind people that have means and no offspring depending upon them, to remember the church in their last will.

#### B—PRESERVATION OF ECCLESIASTICAL PROPERTY.

274. A pastor must be zealous not only in gathering funds for his parish, but also be careful and anxious in preserving well whatever has accumulated in the line of ecclesiastical property, whether movable or immovable. In most congregations there exists a board of trustees, or a committee of laymen, whose office is to assist the priest in the management of the temporalities of the parish. Lest they become a burden, actually ruling things according to their ideas, caution must be used to appoint or elect the right parties. (cf. Coun. Balt. III., No. 287, IV.) In all matters of importance they ought to be consulted. Utter neglect of them is liable to give rise to troubles and dispute.

Finances cannot be kept in order unless there be a written record of both the receipts and the expenditures. In each parish or mission, therefore, several account books (books for pew-rent, collections, day-books), must be had. The entries must be made in a legible way, and the books ought to be kept in a suitable place, at the parsonage, if possible, in an iron safe.

It is proper to have a meeting of the trustees every now and then (monthly, quarterly, or at least annually). An annual account or itemized statement of all sums of money that have been received or disbursed, of all debts, etc., must be made towards the end of the year, or at the beginning of a new year. One copy of it should be sent to the chancellor of the diocese, another kept in the archives of the parish. Also the people at large should be made aware of the financial status. This may be done either by having it read from the pulpit, or by printed reports distributed among the pew-holders.

275. Not only the cash money is to be handled carefully, but the whole property, movable and immovable, must be guarded well and kept in good condition. As to the church edifice, it is very expedient and necessary to watch minutely everything and see that all be in order. The roof, the windows, the steeple, the basement, etc., ought to be examined once in a while. Repairs ought to be made without much delay, as this would increase the cost. Next to the church comes the cemetery. A cemetery must be well fenced in, always closed and locked, the graves, the walks, the trees, etc., well attended to. As consecrated ground, it must not be profaned by amusements, plays of children, etc.

The school house also forms an important object. The rooms must be made so as to accommodate all pupils comfortably and decently. The building itself, walls, doors, and windows, not less than the furniture, must always be kept in such a shape that it is a credit to the congregation, and so that no parent may have a pretext to send his child to a non-Catholic school.

Finally, the priest's own residence ought not to be neglected. The different apartments should be clean and in a good condition. The furniture, it being the property of the congregation, ought not to be abused. If the house be of frame work, it needs a coat of paint occasionally. The yard, trees, garden, farm, stable, attached to the residence, must be well taken care of. Private parties cannot be allowed to encroach upon the property of the congregation and assume rights which they are not entitled to (feeding of cattle, drainage, etc.). Manipulations of this kind may be the cause why such property will sink greatly in value. Though it is not altogether forbidden to sell or rent church property, yet this can be done only with certain restrictions. The lease must not exceed three years. For the sale of real estate and *res pretiosae* or incumbrance by mortgage, the bishop's permission is absolutely necessary. (cf. Bulla "Apost. Sedis," tabella IV., "Ambitiosae.")

Finally, care must be taken to have all church property well insured against fire and storm in some reliable company.

## APPENDIX.

### PRIVATE FINANCES OF THE CLERGY.

276. According to the saying of Holy Scripture: "Qui altari servit, de altari etiam vivere debet," a priest, faithfully attending to his charge, is entitled to such an amount of money from the revenues of the church as to enable him to a proper living, adequate to his position. Since we have no ecclesiastical benefices in this country, custom or diocesan statutes will determine how much those engaged in the sacred ministry shall receive. The bishop of the diocese has the full power to fix the temporal income of his clergy, and no priest has a right to deviate from the rule thus established. If he does so without special permission he is guilty of theft and sacrilege, exposing himself to censure and punishment.

277. The main sources of clerical income in this country are the salary, the *jura stolae*, and donations. In most dioceses special laws exist regulating the salary of the clergy in their various positions. In the absence of such laws, custom or a particular agreement made with the board of trustees will decide the rate. Care should be taken by each clergyman to get what is his due, timely and at the proper season. If he allows it to accumulate too long (over a year), he shall lose all title to it, except the ordinary had granted a prolongation. (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., No. 281.)

By *jura stolae* are meant such fees or perquisites which private parties are wont to give in consideration of ■ personal ministerial service done them by a priest. Local custom or rules again specify how much the people shall pay as to these gifts. The rate in that case is to be taken at the lowest, so that the faithful are not forbidden to give

more (provided such be done entirely voluntarily), nor the clergy to accept more.

Donations sometimes occur as extras for the temporal support of a clergyman. Such donations in the shape of free gifts may be offered either by individual parties, by societies in a body, or by the whole congregation. It must be noticed, however, that when they are not made up in money, but other things, for instance, buggy, horse, house furniture, vestments, etc., they do not always constitute a personal present. A priest may be given only the right of use with the understanding that he will leave the things to his successor in case of removal. Particular circumstances must be considered so as to see whether such offerings are intended as personal and individual. Special collections, taken up in the church with the permission of the bishop, at Christmas or Easter, rank as donations, of which no public account is to be made. Should the ordinary forbid them, the priest must submit and not appropriate to himself any public collection.

278. Although a priest is free in the management of his own pecuniary affairs, yet he cannot lay aside the rules of prudence and justice. He should not rashly contract debts, and promptly pay his creditors. Be not extravagant in spending money, but economical; keep a good account of your private affairs; do not forget the poor, the Church, and works of charity. The Apostle justly remarks: "*Si quis autem domui suae praeesse nescit, quomodo ecclesiae Dei diligentiam habebit?*" (Timothy i., 3, 5.) Also the Council of Baltimore has a monition to this effect worth while reading (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., No. 277). On the whole, a priest should be satisfied with his position and not seek fat places, as they are called, this being entirely contrary to the promise he made when he entered the ecclesiastical state ("*Dominus pars haereditatis meae,*" etc.), and leading to false and treacherous transaction, to calumny, hatred, simony, scandal.

## PART II.

## PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

## CHAPTER I.

## NECESSITY OF PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

279. Whenever possible a Catholic congregation must have its own parochial school, which means a school that is under the immediate supervision of the local pastor, and where all children of the parish receive an elementary education in secular matters, together with sound religious instruction. The civil government in this country does not interfere with Catholics erecting their own schools, but since it does not contribute towards such erection, the support of these schools falls as a duty upon the Catholic body, in particular the parents that send their children thither. The fact that our own people have to pay a double tax (the tax for public schools also being demanded of them) cannot be admitted as sufficient ground for not having a Catholic school, neither is the priest allowed to neglect the erection of a parochial school, or to close one which exists, under the pretext that on account of such a school he shall have much extra work. Only a moral or absolute impossibility (long distance from the church, extreme poverty, etc.), may excuse, at least *pro tempore*. (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., tit. VI.)

280. A priest who has no parochial school in connection with his church will never know the children of his

congregation, the most precious part of his flock, as he ought to, and he may be forced to see them, one after the other, fall away from faith and religion as soon as they get a little older.

A school which "ex principio" excludes religion from its plan, as is the case with our public schools, cannot educate youth in a proper manner, for education is more than teaching. A man, who has been taught only as to his intellect, shall have all the vicious propensities of corrupt nature left in his bosom. Here religion alone is able to remedy the evil and to set nature right. The influence of religion, however, must be brought about when a man is young, in early childhood, and it must go hand in hand with the other branches of education, for a tree can be bent only when it is a little sprout, not after the trunk has become solid. The average moral standing of children that are sent to a public school, where no religion is taught, may often not differ greatly from the moral standing of those children who are educated in a Catholic parochial school; however, the difference will be noticed in after life. The former will have no, or little, power to resist temptations to evil, whilst the latter, by their religious training, will have such power. It cannot be denied that many children of Catholic parents, who were reared in a parochial school, in their future life turn out bad, and fall away from the Church. Granting the fact, it must be remembered, however, that most of them continue to be good, and that not a few of those who apostatize come back.

281. It seems superfluous, indeed, for good Catholics, for pastors and parents to ventilate the school question, as it has been completely settled by ecclesiastical authorities. Papal encyclical letters, both old and recent, and decrees issued by provincial councils, and diocesan synods, in particular by the last Council of Baltimore, have put an end to all controversy on this point. Congregations as a whole, and parents in particular, are bound strictly or "sub gravi" to provide for the education of the rising Catholic genera-



tion by the erection and upholding of parochial schools as long as this is not absolutely or morally impossible for them.

Statuimus et decernimus:

I. Prope unamquamque ecclesiam ubi nondum existit scholam parochialem intra duos annos a promulgatione hujus Concilii erigendam et in perpetuum sustentandam esse, nisi Episcopus ob graviores difficultates dilationem concedendam esse judicet.

II. Sacerdotem qui intra hoc tempus erectionem vel sustentationem scholae gravi sua negligentia impediat, vel post repetitas Episcopi admonitiones non curet mereri remotionem ab illa ecclesia.

III. Missionem vel paroeciam quae sacerdotem in erigenda vel sustentanda schola adjuvare ita negligat, ut ob hanc supinam negligentiam schola existere non possit ab Episcopo esse reprehendendam ac quibus efficacioribus et prudentioribus modis potest, inducendam ad necessaria subsidia conferenda.

IV. Omnes parentes Catholicos prolem suam ad scholas parochiales nittere teneri nisi vel domi vel in aliis scholis Catholicis Christianae filiorum suorum educationi sufficienter et evidenter consulant, aut ob causam sufficientem ab Episcopo approbatam, et cum opportunis cautionibus remediisque eos ad alias scholas mittere ipsis liceat. Quatenus autem sit schola Catholica Ordinarii judicio definiendum relinquitur. (Conc. Baltim. III., n. 199.)

## CHAPTER II.

### MANAGEMENT OF PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

#### A—EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

282. The money needed for the erection and maintenance of parochial schools within the limits of the United

States must be procured in the same way as funds for other ecclesiastical purposes. The house and furniture is usually paid for from the receipts of a special collection or subscription. The salary of teachers is made up by the monthly dues gathered from the pupils attending the schools. The rate of these dues should not be too high (fifty cents the highest). If the total sum does not suffice to defray the expenses, the rest may be supplied by money taken from those church funds which are not destined for a particular purpose. Parties that do not send children to school should be induced, nevertheless, to contribute towards its support, because the parochial school is not simply a private affair, but a thing which concerns the whole congregation, in which all members ought to take an interest. It is with this view that of late free parochial schools have been started after the fashion of public schools, which are free to all children of the district. Wheresoever this can be done it ought to be done, for it is a step in the right direction. The money in such case may be made up by special contributions, or the surplus of pew-rents, etc. Next to the funds, some other external matters are worthy of consideration. Thus the school house should be near the church, on a ground not too low or too damp, lest it injure the health of the children. Light, heat, and ventilation, deserve special care. The furniture must be neat, clean and commodious. The walls should not be left bare, but covered with maps, charts, pictures, etc. As a matter of course, in a Catholic school room a crucifix ought not to be wanting. The toilets must be separate for both sexes, and be in places neither too conspicuous nor too hidden. A playground is indispensable, one for girls and one for boys; likewise a well or cistern, with a constant supply of fresh drinking water, but the children must be watched lest they take cold drink when they are overheated.

## B—INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

283. After the material structure of a school house has been put up, a priest cannot afford to sit down and let the school run its own way, just as if it had to become a success by all means. From the moment that a congregation has been provided with a parochial school, the local pastor assumes the office of a superintendent or principal. The superintendent of a school is expected to be the controlling and directing power of it. His influence ought to be felt throughout the whole school, in all classes and grades, by teachers and pupils. He must, therefore, endeavor to acquire, by study and observation, those qualifications which will enable him to be a leader in the educational sphere. By advocating the parochial school system, by commanding the Catholic laity to establish and maintain their own separate denominational schools, the clergy owe it to the Catholic body, to parents and children, to make these schools efficient in every respect, and able to compete, if not in the exterior, at least in the interior, with the public schools. The local pastor is responsible for all this. Upon him it will depend whether the parochial school shall flourish or not, whether it shall be a credit or a disgrace. (cf. Cons. Balt. III., Nos. 200, 201.)

284. It is to be lamented that our Catholic schools yet lack organization. We have schools, but we have as yet no system, no uniformity in education. Successful attempts to meet this end have been made in some dioceses; but not, by far, in all, or even in the majority of them. In most places our Catholic schools are yet like scattered sprigs, left to themselves, allowed to live or to die, just as circumstances may permit. The duty incumbent, therefore, on the local pastor is so much the heavier and more important. By his zeal and wisdom he ought to supply whatever is wanting in the mode of general organization. Hence, the following suggestions seem to be in order:

The priest's efforts as to success in school work, and

education of the young, are largely dependent upon the assistance he receives from the teachers. In most of our Catholic schools religious persons, both male and female, are employed as teachers. There can be no doubt as to their enterprise, their devotion to the cause of education. Wherever our schools have been a success, it is mainly due to the self-sacrificing spirit with which the religious of both sexes have labored. But, unfortunately, good will is one thing, and ability another. The teacher must have a knowledge of the matter taught and the manner of teaching. This is a weak point in some of our schools. The superiors of religious communities have sometimes sent out, and do still send out, members of theirs as teachers, that are not qualified for the office entrusted to them. This may serve the community, for which each school is a source of income, but it injures the school and is a misfortune for parents and children. The religious garb, piety, devotion, and good example, are certainly quite a help in the work of education, but they cannot supply the absence of knowledge or of ability in teaching. It is, therefore, wrong to put the pupils of a Catholic school into the hands of young, untrained and unskilled novices or candidates. The pastor, on whom the superintendency of the school revolves, must consequently refuse each and every teacher that is not fit, and he should not accept such a one even on trial. However, it must be borne in mind that schools differ. What suffices as the standard of knowledge in one, may be insufficient in another. But no school, even in the most remote rural district, must be permitted to become simply the tool of a religious community.

285. Again, a weak point lies in the frequent change of teachers, especially if they be religious. It cannot be avoided altogether; however, care should be taken to have it arranged so that at least no change could be made by the superiors without the pastor's notice and express consent. The best way is to make a contract, if possible, in writing, in which a clause to this effect is inserted, so that teachers

cannot be removed except for specified reasons. Lay people should never be engaged for teaching without such contract by which they bind themselves to stay for a certain term.

286. The books also deserve attention. In a Catholic school only Catholic books should be used, namely, books which breathe a Catholic spirit throughout, not those which have only a Catholic title page. A certain series of books having been introduced once, a change ought not to be made except for grave reasons. Never should the teachers be allowed to make such change without the special consent and approbation of the local pastor.

287. A school, to be well managed, must be divided into grades. The teachers may do this themselves at the beginning of each scholastic year. Still, it is proper for the pastor to be present when it is done, or to get a complete report of the whole arrangement afterwards.

As to the plan of studies, nothing definite can be said. Circumstances will modify it more or less. The plan made out by the teachers must be examined well by the pastor as superintendent. In quite a number of our schools, no doubt, a great mistake is made by teaching too many things which are proper for high schools and academies, but not for parochial schools. These, being elementary schools, must not overstep their limit. The children should learn the very elements (writing, reading, arithmetic, geography, history), next to Christian doctrine, nothing more. If they receive a sound and thorough instruction in these branches the school fulfills its duty. Teachers, especially females and religious, are sometimes ambitious to have most any branch on their plan of studies, and the more high-sounding the name the more it pleases them. Such abuse must be stopped by the pastor right from the very beginning. A fixed program should be prepared for each class or grade, and for a certain term (say, a month or a quarter), and no deviation from it should be permitted, except after due consultation with the pastor.

Only by united efforts like these the school may prosper, and remain what it ought to be—an elementary school for all, not a high school or academy.

288. To ascertain how the school works, the pastor must visit his school, its different classes at stated hours, every day, if possible. The object of his visit should not be only to give religious instruction, which is his exclusive right, but to make general observations, to watch both teachers and pupils, and to find out the general standard, the progress, the defects, etc. For the same purpose he ought to meet his teachers in a conference from time to time. Finally, public examinations, to which also the parents or school board, if there be any, are invited, must be held once or twice a year, and monthly or quarterly bulletins or testimonials be given to each child. All this will be of great help.

289. It is true, the school managed in this way is a burden and an irksome task for the priest. However, it is a burden made light by success, and it facilitates the other ministerial functions and labors. Priests who do not realize their duty in regard to the school, fail in an important charge of their pastorate, for no portion of the flock deserves such tender and steady care as the young. We ought to learn, indeed, from our enemies, who spare neither money nor labor to make those schools flourish, which are not fit by any means to furnish a truly Christian education, and frequently are decidedly opposed to it.

Some priests use as a pretext for not attending to the school that they lack sufficient theoretical and practical knowledge in education. This supposition is not always ungrounded. However, the conclusion drawn from it is wrong. What follows from it only is that the priest, thus far unable to superintend a school, must make himself gradually acquainted with the rules of pedagogy. To superintend does not mean to make the teacher a tool, but it means to have a keen perception of all that concerns the school, all that contributes towards its welfare, to direct,



and to guide. A year or two of practical work, if theoretical knowledge by reading the proper books on education is added, will not fail to give you sufficient experience. The following appendix is a summary of pedagogical rules:

#### APPENDIX.—REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

##### (A)—REWARDS.

290. Although it is greatly to be wished that man should do his duty, simply for the sake of a good cause, yet it is not wrong to look forward to the reward that may await us. Especially children and young people cannot be educated well except reward, in some shape or other, be held out to them as an incentive. It helps to stir their ambition, their zeal and application. They thus become accustomed to what in after life will be a blessing, namely, untiring labor. No reasonable objection, therefore, could be raised against this feature of education, provided a moderate use is made of it with sufficient discretion and distinction.

Rewards ought to be given sparingly, lest they become a common affair, and cease to have an effect. Besides only true merit, such as application or industry in learning, or good conduct, must serve as a basis; not personal predilection, or external reasons, for instance, riches or influence of parents.

As to the particular shape in which rewards may be given, no general rule can be laid down, except that they must be in proportion to age, to sex, and to the work itself that has been performed.

##### (B)—PUNISHMENTS.

291. As the hope of receiving a reward stirs ambition and helps to make children good, so the fear of punishment

stays wickedness and prevents them from doing wrong. But for this purpose it is necessary to take a correct view of the matter and not overstep the limits which prudence and experience suggest. Punishment presupposes guilt. For want of talents, for weak memory, for deficiency in judgment, involuntary forgetfulness, or accidental damage, a pupil at school deserves no punishment, but rather kind advice. Besides, punishment in school has only one object, *i. e.*, correction. The teacher, in punishing, does not resemble the judge, but the physician. Persons are not wont to apply to the physician for every trifle, and so also at school children ought not to be punished for every small fault. Medicine must not be turned into daily food. It is much better to educate by good example, and appeal to self-respect.

Regard must be taken of the individual case, and the punishment shaped according to it. Thus it makes quite a difference whether one and the same external act has been performed through wickedness or through carelessness; whether it has been the first or second time; whether the delinquent shows sorrow and shame, or is little sensitive of what he has done.

292. Punishments may be classified in the following manner:

1. Reproof. It has many degrees. It may be given by a look, a gesture, a movement of the hand or head, or by words. It may be done privately or publicly. In no case, however, should it become an insult by the use of opprobrious names.

2. Separation from the rest of the class. It is a punishment fit for quarrelsome, talkative children, but only for those of young age and for a short time.

3. Confinement after school hour. It should be resorted to only for real mischief, great neglect in studying, and the like, and always be under the supervision of the teacher.

4. Imposition of tasks (Strafarbeit). The writing which they have to perform must not be too much, and it must bear proportion to the nature of the fault.

5. Corporal punishment. Some have rejected it altogether. No doubt it is an extreme means, and must not be used except in extreme cases for grave moral faults, such as lying, stealing, impurity, obstinacy, and stubbornness. As a matter of course, it is applicable only to children of a younger age (up to ten or eleven), rather with boys than with girls. A priest must never punish girls in this way, since it is against clerical decorum. The health of the youth ought not to be hurt by corporal punishment, and also the civil laws must be taken into consideration.

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## PART III.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION.

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## CHAPTER I.

SOCIETIES.

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## ARTICLE I.

## SOCIETIES IN GENERAL.

293. The Church being a living body, cannot sustain her life unless the individual members be mindful of their obligations they have in their own sphere, and try to exercise a wholesome influence one upon another. To effect this and to facilitate the great aim which the God-Mán Christ has entrusted to His Spouse, it has been customary from apostolic times to divide the work, and to assign to those engaged in the sacred ministry a certain portion or field of labor. This is the origin of dioceses, parishes, congregations, etc., which, in the particular form in which they exist to-day, are the result of history and human action, but as to their end and essence, they are the natural outgrowth of that ecclesiastical organism that has been instituted by the divine Saviour Himself. A parish priest, pastor, or rector, as people are wont to call him, after he has been assigned to his post through legal author-

ity, is bound in conscience to watch over the spiritual welfare of his flock. Both individual persons and the parish as a body come under his care. Leaving aside now the question what is to be done with the individual, we shall first discuss the means by which the spiritual standard of the whole congregation as a body could be enhanced. The most effectual means of this kind to-day are societies.

294. Societies may be formed in different ways, and for different objects. There are societies formed by men of certain professions, for example, business men, literary men, etc., with a solely temporal but laudable object. These do not come within the jurisdiction of the Church at all. There are secret societies more or less opposed to religion. These have been condemned by the Church. There are societies composed of Catholics only, but with no decidedly Catholic object. About these the Church remains indifferent. Finally, there are "Catholic societies" to which only practical Catholics may belong, and which propose to themselves to foster Catholic faith and morals in some particular sphere. They may be formed so that all Catholics, irrespective of diocese or parish, can join them, or so that only the members of a certain parish may belong to them. The latter are called parish societies, and the parish priest is the natural ruler and leader of them, so much so, that without his consent or approbation, none of the kind could be erected, or, if erected, could continue to exist. It may be disputed theoretically whether it is wise or unwise to have Catholic societies within the limits of a parish. Practically the question has been settled. At least in city parishes of considerable size they are an absolute necessity because without them Catholics will remain isolated, and may be easily caught by societies which are hostile to Church and religion. The children of light ought to learn from the children of darkness. If the latter use all sorts of attractions to draw people into their camp, the former should do the same in their own way, and concentrate the

conservative and Catholic forces, which are in the individual into a common union or body, thus to undo all evil influence by concerted action. The number of Catholics lost to the Church annually in cities and towns is great; still it would be greater if zealous priests and pastors had not tried to build a bulwark around their flocks in the shape of parochial Catholic societies. If at times they give rise to evil, it, on the whole, is outborne by the good they effect. The management and direction of societies demand extra labor on the part of the priest, but no work should be too hard for a man that is filled with a zeal for the House of God, the best ornaments of which always are faithful, virtuous souls. A Catholic priest ought not to allow himself to be surpassed in zeal by Protestant ministers and agents of secret societies. Hence we deem it proper to make a few suggestions concerning the management of parochial societies:

295. 1. Societies are free organizations, wherefore no undue influence should be used to make people enter them. The best means to promote and propagate them is the good example of the actual members.

2. Care must be taken in admitting new members. Only those should be chosen whose antecedents give a sufficient guarantee that they will be a credit to the society, for the society is no field of trial with an object to reform people. Those who are not practical Catholics, who belong to a secret lodge, or who have given public scandal, must be excluded.

3. No less vigilance must be exercised in removing promptly from the ranks of a society those who prove to be troublesome, or who do not by their very lives show that they are ready to foster the ends for which the society has been organized.

4. No society shall be able to live long unless the members meet at stated times, both for religious exercises and social gatherings, to discuss matters appertaining to their organization. Regular attendance must be secured



by roll call or other means. The meetings must not occur too often; they must be held on the proper day and at the proper hour. They ought to be made interesting, so that all have a desire to be present. Therefore, it is of importance to have a variety of religious exercises. The address given by the priest or pastor, instead of being a sermon or a commonplace talk, should be a well-prepared lecture on subjects which are apt to arouse attention. Such are social problems, historical topics, etc. Also, the so-called question box may prove useful for this purpose, especially with a young ladies' society.

5. All parochial societies must have a clause in their constitution or by-laws by which the members are obliged to receive the Sacraments in a body at fixed times, circumstances determining how often or when.

6. Societies have need of pecuniary resources. The money should be given into the hands of a treasurer, chosen by the members. This treasurer must be a trustworthy person, and be requested to give a full account at the meetings. It is a bad policy on the part of the pastor to assume the office of treasurer himself, to divert the moneys gathered by societies from the end for which the society has been established, except at a special occasion, when, upon a common vote, the members decide to make a donation to the church, school, etc.

7. The election of the various officers should take place without interference from outsiders. Even the priest should not use his influence, save in a general way. Officers are elected by secret ballot, and, as a rule, should serve only one term, so as to avoid jealousy and ill-feeling.

## ARTICLE II.

### SOCIETIES IN PARTICULAR.

296. Parish societies must be divided according to sex and age. Men and women, the younger and the older

portion of the congregation, should have their separate organizations. Following this principle, every large city parish could and should have at least four distinct bodies, that of young men, of young women, of married men, and of married women.

(A)—THE SOCIETY OF YOUNG MEN.

297. No class of people deserve more attention and care on the part of the parish priest than the young men, for no class is exposed to greater dangers regarding faith and morals, so much, indeed, that it is almost a wonder if a young man in our days and country does not fall away from Church and religion. Clergymen having charge of souls seeing this and remaining idle, are not doing their duty as they ought. The objection sometimes made that, in spite of all exertion, still the young men fall away, does not avail because even if the percentage thus saved should be small, it is worth the pains and trouble, since the future of the Church will depend greatly upon it.

To induce the young men to start or enter into a society of their own, the priest should visit them in their homes or places of work, and try to gain their confidence by friendly and familiar conversation, since otherwise they may feel reluctant and rather prefer to remain at a distance from the clergy. This society, that it may flourish and succeed well, must have a special hall or room, rented or bought, where the members may meet and amuse themselves in innocent sports and plays of various kinds. This feature is necessary to outweigh the evil influence to which they are exposed in public places of amusement. Prudence, however, suggests to commence on a small scale and to enlarge the concern gradually, lest the expenses run too high from the very beginning and deter many from joining. Order must be kept up as to the days, hours, seasons of the meetings, wherefore the officers entrusted with the management should be reliable men, somewhat elderly, and

those in whom the rest have confidence and whom they will respect. The pastor or priest may visit the young men in their hall frequently, speak friendly to them, encourage them, but, as a rule, he should not take actual part in their games or sports, or only seldom.

298. It helps a great deal towards keeping up the interest in the society if, from time to time, a special address in the form of a lecture is given to the members by their own pastor, or some other clergyman. For this occasion they may be allowed to bring their non-Catholic friends along, but for this occasion only. It is an abuse to have mixed meetings of Catholics and Protestants under the pretext thus to make converts, likewise to have mixed meetings of both sexes in the hope to effect and open the way to Catholic marriages. Bad scandals will usually be the outcome of these gatherings.

299. In regard to the reception of the Sacraments, it is advisable not to ask too much of the young men. It is better to demand little, and then be strict in enforcing it. In most cases the pastor ought to be satisfied if they go to confession and receive Holy Communion in a body four times a year. To control it, and to secure regularity, various modes may be resorted to; for instance, small cards or tickets collected by the secretary. Absentees should be admonished, but not dismissed at once, until after repeated warnings they show utter neglect. A prudent pastor will usually not fail, by kind words, to keep such that are wanting in regularity within the ranks of the society.

#### (B)—THE SOCIETY OF YOUNG LADIES.

300. The most important parish society, next to that of young men, is the society of young women. It is usually erected as a sodality of the Blessed Virgin under various titles (Immaculate Conception, Annunciation, etc.). All the young maidens of the parish, from the

time they are dismissed from Sunday school or Christian doctrine class, until they get married, may and should belong to it. Circumstances often render it difficult to have a young men's society in the parish, but a young ladies' society could be started easily, and no parish even of small size ought to be without it, at least in cities. The female sex has a natural tendency towards religion and is inclined to works of piety. The pastor need but foster this spirit a little, and he will not experience serious difficulties towards getting a flourishing young maidens' sodality. However, he must be careful to observe a certain sobriety and dignity in word and action with these spiritual children, lest they lose the respect they owe him and by too great familiarity cause be given to jealousy, envy, slanderous talk, and even to scandal.

301. The young women society ought to meet once a month, on a Sunday or weekday. They may first convene in the church (before a Blessed Virgin's altar) and have some religious exercises consisting of prayer, singing, and a short address made by the priest. The subject of this address should be adapted to the peculiar wants of the hearers (mixed marriages, company-keeping, vocation to the religious state, helping the poor, etc.). On the whole it is of importance to foster in the members those virtues which become their age and sex, such as modesty, humility, obedience, charity, etc. After they have thus met in church, they may meet in some other convenient place (school room, basement, priest house) for the transaction of business and those matters which could not be dealt with well in church.

302. It is good to furnish this society with a well selected library, containing books that are fit to be read by Catholic maidens. As to the reception of the Sacraments, it is customary to oblige the members of this sodality of young women to a monthly communion. At this occasion they should wear the medal or other badge, and have a short thanksgiving in a body after receiving. Finally, it

helps well to draw the attention to the society and to gain members, if at the marriage, at the funeral, etc., of a sodalist, care is taken to display some special pomp and solemnity. To secure the blessing of heaven, it is also proper to have a Mass said once a month for the society. The stipend should be furnished from the society funds.

(C)—SOCIETIES OF MEN.

303. The third society deserving attention is that of men, comprising under this name the male portion of the parish which is married, or, if they are unmarried, being at least of an advanced age. There are different ways of starting such a society. Either have a society with a solely religious end (Holy Name society against cursing, etc.) or form a union with a sort of temporal appendix in the shape of mutual aid in time of sickness or case of death. This latter may be more preferable because it is highly practical and takes away all excuses which otherwise they are wont to allege for joining a secret lodge, to which a life insurance policy is attached. The difficulty arising from the danger that this mutual aid society might become too independent, could be removed or lessened if the rector of the congregation acts with prudence and without haste when troubles occur. It is advisable to have a special clause inserted in the constitution, giving to the priest or local pastor the right of always attending and presiding at the meetings, even if he be no member himself. These meetings may be held once a month. Those who belong to the society should receive the Sacraments in a body with badges or regalia, four times a year, or at least three times (at the Christmas or Easter season).

304. A special remark may be added here about temperance societies. Temperance societies, well arranged, will not fail to create much good amongst the members and for the parish at large. Their object is to foster soberness.

and moderation in the use of intoxicating liquors, which object is very laudable and has the approbation of the highest ecclesiastical authorities. (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., no. 262.)

There are two ways in establishing these societies, either as a total abstinence union or as a league of the cross. The former obliges its members to drop the use of liquors altogether, the latter only aims at doing away with excess, especially with treating. The means adopted by both are the pledge (an oral or written promise), prayer and the Sacraments. The pledge is only accidental or subordinate, and may be taken also by those who do not belong to the society. It alone will not render or keep a man sober; the spiritual aid offered by Christ and His Church must be added. Therefore, the members of a temperance society should say a special prayer every day and receive holy Communion in a body at fixed seasons.

305. In German congregations the "Central Verein" deserves mention. It is a mutual aid society spread over the whole United States. It has existed for a long time, has always been loyal to Catholic principles, and has done great good.

306. We cannot help, either, in this connection making an observation on the Catholic Foresters. This society is of late origin. They are called "Catholic Foresters" to distinguish them from the "Independent Foresters," who constitute a more or less forbidden society. The Catholic Foresters are a mutual aid union, and for this reason deserve to be encouraged. Still, there are features about them that give us a right to look upon them with suspicion. These features lie in the ceremonies and mummeries adopted by them after the fashion of the secret lodges. They also aim at independence from ecclesiastical authority and care too much, it appears, for worldly pleasure and amusement. On the whole, they may be tolerated, especially if the leaders are reliable men, but it is advisable not to start a court of Foresters, least of



all of lady Foresters, if there be none. If, however, they have been established, then keep them under strict watch and control, in particular have an eye on the officers.

#### D—SOCIETIES OF WOMEN.

307. Besides the young ladies' sodality, there should be a society made up of married women. It may either be connected with the altar society, especially in small parishes, or be altogether separate. In the latter case, it could be erected under the title of "Christian Mothers' Union," "Rosary Society," "St. Ann's Society," etc. In one way or other it ought to exist in almost every congregation.

The "Society of Christian Mothers" is a canonical confraternity and care must be taken to have the rubrics and rules, as prescribed by the *Congregatio Rituum*, well observed. Its object is to foster in Christian mothers those virtues which they need in the education of the young. The married women, when they form a band or union, should receive the Sacraments in a body once a month or at least every other month, and have a meeting just as often with a sort of conference given by the rector of the church on the obligations of their state of life.

Apart from these four parochial societies there may be others, which it is enough simply to mention: St. Vincent's Society for the Poor, Catholic Knights, Holy Angels' Society, and last but not least, The Third Order of St. Francis.

## CHAPTER II.

#### PASTORAL CARE OF INDIVIDUAL PERSONS.

308. A priest charged with the care of souls must not only attend to the parish at large by the ordinary spiritual means, but also watch over the individual members and

apply extraordinary means with those who cannot be expected to be reached by the ordinary ministry. Here the following suggestions may be in order:

In not a few parishes we find persons who need a special and separate instruction in faith and morals, since the general preaching of Christian truth does not reach them, partly because they cannot go to church at all, partly because they still lack knowledge of the very fundamental principles of religion. Such persons are deaf mutes, blind people, idiots, and those that are confined to their beds and houses on account of broken or paralyzed limbs, general weakness, etc. The only way to reach these parties is to teach them privately at visits made from time to time in their houses. It is a tiresome and unpleasant task, but a true shepherd must not lose sight of these sheep, and be encouraged by the example of our Lord and the thought that thus he will be able to save one more soul for heaven. As a rule, that knowledge should be imparted to them, by which they are disposed to receive the Sacraments. Therefore, let them learn the ordinary prayers, the principal articles of faith, the ten commandments, the commandments of the Church, the acts of faith, hope, love, and contrition. Also an opportune warning against intemperance and sensual lust, to which these persons may be inclined, will not be out of place. If lay people, charitable men or women, can be found to lend a helping hand in such instruction, they should be engaged for the purpose. One thing, however, is certain, deaf and dumb children must not be sent to a Protestant or State institution for their education, as they are sure to lose their faith. Parents not willing to submit to this rule cannot be absolved. The same holds good about orphans. They, if possible, ought to be placed in a good Catholic family, or else be sent to a Catholic orphanage, but never to a Protestant or State institution. If by chance this has been done, a pastor should not rest until he has regained such a soul. He should also look after the

spiritual wants of all those Catholics who are inmates of poor-houses, schools of reform, asylums, etc., in case such houses lie within his district. The poor you have always with you, Christ said, thus insinuating that he wishes his followers, in particular his priests, to help those who are destitute and needy.

309. Next in order to those mentioned, the rector of a parish or mission should have an eye upon such members of his congregation as either through sin and malice, or through negligence, have become somewhat estranged from the Church, or who, on account of particular circumstances, do not practise their religion as they should. Under this head fall parties living in mixed or invalid marriages, those who have contracted marriage before a squire or preacher, those who fell out with the former pastor, who are members of secret societies, drunkards, and habitual sinners, heads of families neglecting their duties towards their children. Sometimes a kind word and well-meant warning tendered at the right time and season may produce a wonderful effect.

310. In connection with this whole matter we cannot help inserting a few remarks on various scandals which a pastor is bound either to prevent or uproot. Thus:

(a) Scandals may arise from lawsuits and public quarrels. The priest must use his influence to reconcile parties who are on bad terms by compromise, before they go to court and he should do this even if he has not been asked to act as arbitrator. His position as such entitles him to it, because it is his duty to prevent sin, which usually is the consequence of strifes and quarrels.

(b) A dissension or trouble existing between a married couple may be the cause of great evil if not brought to a stop in due time and season. Married persons are not allowed on their own warrant to get separated "*a thoro et mensa*." If they did, they must be induced to return to each other, or else, as a rule, they cannot be absolved. It is a parish priest's duty to bring such parties

to terms. The best mode to effect this may be to have a consultation first with the man, afterwards with the woman, and then with both together.

(c) Scandals may be caused through agents of secret societies, who, under the pretext of giving a cheap life-insurance, or of enhancing their business, entice Catholics to join the lodges. If there is reason to fear that quite a number of men in the parish may be gained over by these emissaries, it is but proper to give a public warning from the pulpit, otherwise it may be sufficient to privately see those parties who are on the point of being seduced.

(d) Scandals may arise from saloons, boarding houses, and such like places, the proprietors of which allow all sorts of people, and suspicious characters, to meet there in order to drink, to gamble, to dance, etc., and this at any time, day or night, Sunday or week-day. To check this evil, it is advisable first to have a private talk with the owners of such establishments; if that fail, to denounce the whole affair publicly in church; although it must be done with great circumspection, lest it lead to a law-suit, and the last things become worse than the first.

(e) A source of scandal is found not seldom in the circulation of bad and immoral papers, and books or publications that are hostile to faith and religion. Also papers which sail under a Catholic flag, but defend that false modern liberalism, condemned by the Roman Pontiffs, come under this head. Much evil is done by such products of the press. There are various ways to combat it. Prudence must tell each pastor what mode may be the best for him to choose. Never, however, should he be silent, pretending that he could not stop the evil-tide.

(f) Scandals may result from factions which have originated among the members of a parish. A priest sent to such a place should be patient and wait, not hold either with one faction or the other, but do simply his duty as pastor, following accurately the instructions of his bishop.

Leave them alone in fighting their cause if they want to. Thus they will lose ground, and in a short time all will be quiet. A patient and forbearing priest has sometimes done wonders in a place where an ambitious and hot-tempered man had been an utter failure.

These are a few scandals of frequent occurrence. No priest should feel discouraged if confronted with them. As long as this world exists, scandals must needs come. A zealous worker in the vineyard of the Lord ought to take consolation in the thought that whether he meet with success or not, eternal reward shall not fail him.

## APPENDIX.

### MISSIONS.

311. A mission is for the laity what a retreat is for the clergy, that is to say, an extraordinary means to arouse people from spiritual lethargy and to reform both individuals and the whole parish at large. This being its sole object, it must not be made a business affair or be turned into an occasion of raising money, as then it will be a failure.

Each parish, large or small, should have a mission once in a while, so as to keep up the divine fire of love amongst the faithful, and prevent them from becoming luke-warm or estranged from the church. A period of five years is about the average time for holding missions, since within that time the complexion of a parish changes. However, that a mission should be successful, the following rules must be observed :

(a) Select a good season of the year at which all can attend without much inconvenience. For cities, spring may be the fittest time; for a country district, the early fall, after harvest is over.

(b) Make arrangements with the missionary fathers

or their superiors soon enough (about a year ahead). Tell them the circumstances of the congregation, what work is to be done, which fathers you prefer, etc.

(c) Announce the mission to the people about a month in advance, encourage them to come, engage them to pray that God's grace may not be wanting; also have public prayers said (after Mass) for the same purpose.

(d) Visit personally those who have fallen away from the Church, the tepid, careless Catholics, in a word, all those who, without a personal appeal, are liable not to take part in the mission.

(e) Stay at home yourself during the mission, watch things closely and attend to such matters that could not well be left in the hands of the missionary, for instance, instruction of converts, of ignorant and negligent Catholics, rectification of marriages, etc. It is wrong to leave the parish entirely to the care of the missionary fathers and to go on a vacation tour.

(f) Have a sufficient amount of mission goods (prayer books, short popular books of instruction, rosaries, medals, etc.,) on hand. Either attend to the sale yourself or have a good Catholic man or woman sell these articles. But do not overcharge the people who come to buy, nor allow others to do so.

(g) Let a collection be taken up in church but once a day, during the principal service. Tell the people beforehand, ere the mission opens, that you have expenses, and that you expect them to do their duty in defraying these expenses. During the mission itself, to speak of money matters, or to charge entrance, will always cripple the spiritual effects of the mission.

(h) No mission should last less than a week. In large congregations it must extend over two weeks; the first week for the women, the second week for the men.

(i) The greatest difficulty always has been, and always will be, to preserve the fruits of the mission. The fire, which was ablaze, will soon go out, unless steps be



taken at once to keep it alive. This is the duty of the local clergy. The pastor should preach a few sermons on perseverance, after the missionaries have departed; he should widen the instructions given by them; he should keep in close personal contact with those who have been brought back to the fold during the mission. Converts that have asked for admission into the Church should be thoroughly instructed. Zeal, in a word, should be displayed along the whole line of parochial work. Thus a large portion of the good seed sown during the mission will not fail to produce a lasting fruit, and many a soul will be saved forever.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PRIEST'S PRIVATE LIFE.

312. The good example set by a priest in his private life cannot fail to contribute greatly towards raising the standard of virtue amongst his parishioners. Hence a special chapter should be devoted to this matter. What we intend to say, however, is the following:

A priest must love his home and retire to it always as soon as his transactions with the outer world are done. It is, therefore, proper that the residence destined as a dwelling place for the clergy be respectable and in accordance with their dignity. Both excessive luxury and excessive poverty should be avoided in putting up parochial residences. Of course, regard must be taken of the means of the congregation. And if a clergyman for a while is forced to make his abode in an unassuming place, he should be satisfied nevertheless, and try to seek consolation in the thought that thus he has a chance to imitate the example of our Lord Christ Jesus, who, according to His own declaration, had no place where to lay His head in rest.

313. Not the edifice, however, alone constitutes a true home, but the manner in which a clergyman spends his time and the mode which he observes in dealing with those

who are his domestics and who live with him under the same roof. Therefore, we deem it proper to make a few suggestions:

The interior of a Catholic priest's house ought to have a Catholic aspect, or have, as it were, a Catholic atmosphere. The pictures, statues, etc., seen there should represent religious emblems, not be altogether profane, and still less lascivious. The rooms, in particular the priest's sitting room, should not be filled with a disorderly mass of things that are not consistent with clerical profession, such as farming utensils, rifles, and other articles of sport. Neither should the other extreme occur of making of such a room a lady's boudoir. Practical tact and prudence will not fail to find the right way in this regard.

314. A thing which always should be in a priest's house is a well selected library. Books are for the clergy what tools are for mechanics. They will prevent a priest from being idle and help him ever to remain a man of culture and study. It is a great mistake to believe that with what one has learned in the seminary and in his young days, all study has come to an end. Many things will soon be forgotten, unless they be kept ever fresh in our memory. New points, new ideas, new questions will turn up in course of time, the laws of the Church, the rubrics are liable to be changed. For all this study, constant systematic study, is necessary. Other professional men, lawyers, doctors, etc., also acknowledge this in their own sphere. A priest should therefore not be less industrious, not to say that a clergyman omitting to study and dropping it for good, will not be a man of prayer either, and thus fall into many temptations, and even into mortal sin.

315. To render a home attractive, it is of importance to preserve cleanliness all around, inside and outside, and to have all things in their proper place. It looks, no doubt, odd to a stranger entering a priest's house to see confusion everywhere, to notice how to animals (dogs, cats, chickens, etc.), free access is given. A clergyman should

bear in mind that cleanliness is next to godliness, and that unclean manners at home will lead to unclean manners in church and sanctuary.

316. About his time and the use he makes of it, a priest cannot be too much on his guard. Although it is impossible for a priest engaged in parochial work to follow a daily plan, as we see it followed by the members of a religious community, yet it is wrong to have no schedule at all and to do what a person feels a liking or notion for just at the moment. Those who act on this principle are liable to lose a great deal of their precious time, and to do many a thing, which duty calls for, imperfectly. The excuse that there is too much interruption to a schedule, once gotten up, does not avail, for there are many days on which it could be well observed with a little good will. To all the ordinary matters, such as meditation, the celebration of Mass, recitation of the office, instruction in school, visiting the sick, etc., a fixed hour must be assigned. What is left ought to be filled out by study and other useful occupation. Also, recreation may figure on the plan. Such recreation which is not mere idleness, could be sought for in various ways, for instance, in music, in gardening, in light mechanical work, and last, but not least, in the company of others. Still, in looking for such company, caution is necessary. It is not advisable for priests to move much in the society of lay people, simply for the sake of having a pastime, but they may and should go once in a while in quest of the company of their own confreres. Such clerical gatherings, when held soberly, and within a limited space of time, will prove beneficial and be a safeguard against narrowmindedness. Excess in eating, drinking, smoking, high expenses, an immoderate use of games, late hours, must be avoided, because these things are liable to destroy both soul and body, and may create scandal.

317. The cleanliness in the house, referred to above, should also be seen about the priest's own person. He

should not make of himself either a sloven or a dude. At home and in church or sacristy, he should always wear the cassock; when abroad he should wear at least the Roman collar, and in his whole dress, as to color and style, observe the ecclesiastical spirit and clerical decorum. (cf. Conc. Baltim. III., 77.)

318. The question about the private life of a priest cannot be discussed well without touching upon the mode of keeping house, and the qualities of servants chosen for that purpose. There are no laws prohibiting the employment of female servants by priests, but there are both natural and ecclesiastical laws restricting it. It may be disputed, reasons being pro and con, whether it is advisable for a priest to have as his servant a close relative (sister, cousin, etc.,) or a stranger. Local or personal circumstances will usually decide it. As unwise, however, and liable to create difficulties we must mention the practice of those who take almost their whole family into the parsonage of the parish, in which they work as pastors.

The person chosen by a priest as his attendant, must, of course, first of all, be a good cook or housekeeper; but she must also be gifted with other qualities, and the principal ones are these:

(a) A good name (*mulier quae nullam suspicionem ingerat*). No hysterical person, none of a light character, no fallen woman, even if reformed, no woman separated from her husband, no Protestant, is fit for the position.

(b) Elderly age (*neque aetate neque forma suspecta*), except with close relatives. The ordinary age is about forty.

(c) Piety, *i. e.*, good solid piety (*no devotula*).

(d) Love of solitude; otherwise she will create scandal by her talk and running around.

(e) Humility and obedience (*dominari ne praesumant*). She is not a ruler, but a servant.

(f) Chastity and simplicity in her words, her gestures, her dress.

Not only in the selection of the right person is prudence and caution necessary, but also in the way of dealing with her.

Here we suggest the following:

1. Make a contract with a servant only for a limited term.

2. Pay her wages regularly (monthly) even if she is your own relative; the wages should be neither too high, nor too scanty.

3. Never allow a servant to mingle with parochial affairs (*non parochiali administrationi sese immisceant*), and therefore never speak in her presence about the various families of the congregation.

4. Be kind and patient with servants; do not at once lose your temper when something goes wrong; do not scold them before strangers.

5. Avoid familiarity with a female servant. Do not sit down in her room simply for the sake of a talk, nor allow her to do this in your room. It is wrong to eat your meals with your servant maid at the same table and at the same hour.

6. Do not travel alone with a female servant, even if she be your own sister, neither in localities where you are known, nor in localities where you are unknown (*ancillas suas nunquam secum ad convivia, nundinas peregrinationes deducant, multo minus solas itinere comites habeant*).

7. Watch your domestics well as to the manner in which they treat the people of the congregation; urge them to be kind and polite.

8. Give them sufficient opportunity to attend to their religious duties, Mass, confession, communion, etc. Never hear their confessions yourself; send them off elsewhere or get another priest to come.

8. Do not permit your housekeeper to invite a number

of women from the parish or outside, even her own relatives, to have a meeting for the purpose of a frolic in the parsonage or its surroundings. Be watchful as to persons whom she visits or who come to visit her.

By the prudent observance of these rules, which, however, may be modified, many evils will be prevented and the good name of the priest shall remain intact.

319. To add a few words about the way a priest should act towards persons of the other sex in general, we must bear in mind that the spirit of the world is the spirit of fornication. Therefore, it is of great importance to avoid all which tends towards causing suspicion in that regard. In particular, we wish to say this:

1. Do not visit, except for strict business, houses or places where women, especially young girls, may offer a sort of attraction. To go to parties, weddings, banquets, etc., whenever it can be easily omitted, is a dangerous thing for a priest. The pretext that thus you might have a chance to know your people better does not avail, because at such occasions they seldom let out their true character.

2. Do not arrange festivities in your own house in which a mixed society of men and women take part.

3. Be careful in admitting too frequently to your own residence the so-called devotees. If they have doubts and perplexities, refer them to the confessional. To talebearers, simply close your door under all circumstances.

4. Do not accept presents from ladies unless you are sure of their pure intention.

5. Do not allow female teachers or organists to board in the parochial residence.

320. In connection with this whole subject the priest's private life, we also deem it proper to give a few hints concerning the manner in which assistants should act towards their pastors. An assistant, usually a young priest, should respect in his pastor the elderly confrere and be ready to learn from him as a man of practical experience. For this end, however, it is necessary that there be



a sort of confidential feeling between both from the very outset. The first meeting will generally decide the whole future. Therefore, it is highly advisable for a young priest or a new-comer not to be too forward, but to show modesty in his words and actions, avoiding all criticism. He ought to submit to the arrangements the pastor makes about the room, meals and all things in and around the house, for the pastor is the master of the house. If the assistant has any wishes, let him express them respectfully, but submit if he cannot realize them. Let him not cause inconvenience by inviting friends, relatives, especially females, or even other priests of his own age and acquaintance too often and too freely, or keep late hours with them. When the pastor goes out, the assistant should stay at home; if he himself leaves for a longer time, a day or more, he should make it known so that he could be sent for if necessary.

321. As to the parochial work, let the assistant do what the rector of the parish assigns to him. When too much is demanded, a kind remonstrance may set things right; if not, an application and recourse to the bishop should be made, but it is wrong and ungentleman-like to revolt and flatly refuse what is asked. If the pastor has to say something about the manners of the assistant, the latter should accept it thankfully and not become irritated and haughty. Customs which the rector of the parish has observed in his ministerial functions should be followed by the assistant also, unless they be decidedly forbidden under mortal sin. If reform is needed, it is the bishop's business, not the assistant's. The assistant, finally, should not visit families or parties who are opposed to the pastor and foster a spirit of rebellion. This may lead to very bad results. The assistant must never forget his position; he must know that he ought to be a helping hand to the pastor, and that in no case he is justified, either directly or indirectly, to undermine his authority. Even in the confessional he should not listen to complaints made

against the pastor. A young man who acts on these principles will not fail to draw the grace of the Holy Ghost upon his work, and his memory will not be forgotten in the places where he has been working.

## CONCLUSION. CONCLUSIO

322. At the end of these lectures on Pastoral Theology, we may be allowed to repeat what we have said in our introduction at the beginning. A priest charged with the care of souls must needs be gifted with two virtues, charity and prudence. Charity is, as it were, the moving power of his ministry; prudence is the leader. Like the fiery cloud went before the people of Israel in the desert, to show them the way to the promised land, thus prudence ought to precede always a priest's actions and protect him from the pitfalls which beset his path. This prudence is partly natural, partly supernatural. Natural prudence is acquired through experience, study, and a keen observation of men and their doings. Supernatural prudence is a gift of the Holy Ghost and is obtained through prayer. A priest who has been sent by his bishop to take charge of a parish, or mission, is thus constituted a divine shepherd. A portion, therefore, of the whole Church, be it ever so small, is under his immediate care, and he is responsible for each soul thus entrusted to him. He stands there like the head officer of a regiment or detachment of soldiers, which forms but a part of the whole army, but which for its moves depends first of all upon the orders it receives from its immediate head officer. Victory or defeat is thus the result of his commands. Glorious, indeed, would be the victory of the great Army of Christ if every priest were to do his duty. "Non mundo sed Deo servimus." This must forever be our motto. As Jesus Christ, the great

High-priest of the New Law, did not seek His own glory, but that of His Father, so each priest of the Holy Catholic Church must also divest himself from what is his own and make all private and selfish interests subservient to the post he holds. He should say, from the moment of his ordination to the moment when he will breathe his last, all days of his life: "Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed Tibi soli Deo, uni et trino sit—

Sempiterna laus, honor, virtus et gloria."

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